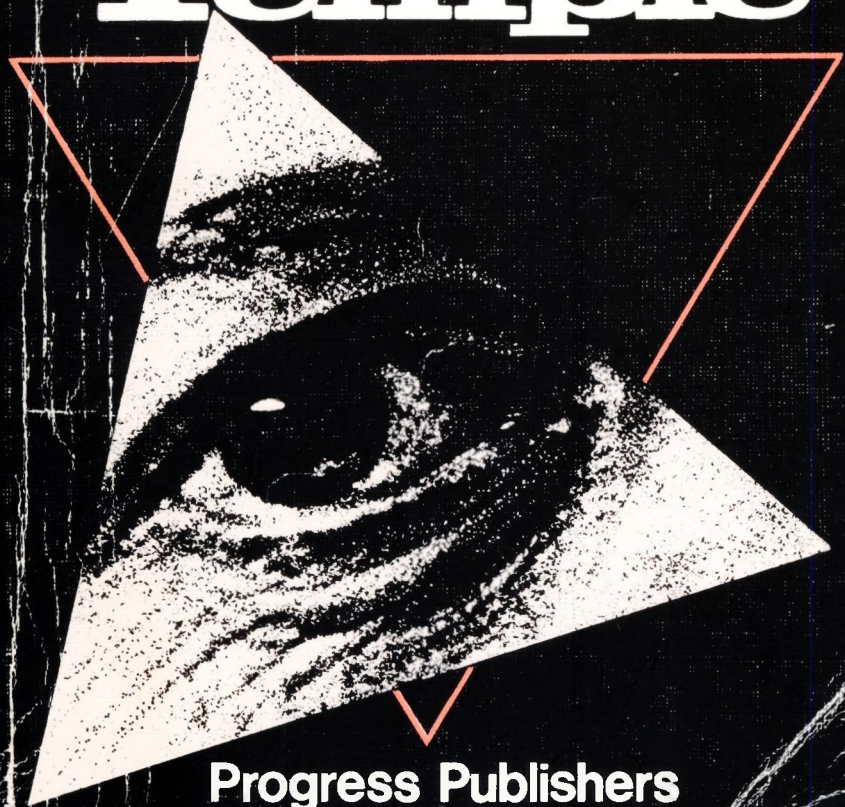


Lolly Zamoisky

Behind the Façade of the Masonic Temple



Progress Publishers

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Façade
of the
Masonic
Temple**



Progress Publishers
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Translated from the Russian by *Vyacheslav Nemodruk*
Designed by *Alexander Yefremov*

Лоллий Замойский

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Introduction

The fraternity of Freemasons¹ is one of the oldest sects still influential in the capitalist world, and this explains the unabating interest in its goals, in the origin and development of Freemasonry, in the circumstances that contributed to its rise, and in its attitude to the more important problems of human progress, including that of safeguarding peace. The present book is an attempt to throw light on this controversial and in many ways arcane phenomenon.

The agenda of the World Congress of "Builders of the World Temple of Solomon," held in Paris in May 1987, was "The Place of Freemasonry in the Modern World."

It was attended by 800 delegates of 235 Masonic trends from 58 countries.² As Roger Leray, the Grand Master of the Grand Orient of France³, said proudly, the delegates were "acknowledged at the highest state level" (the President of the French Republic gave a reception at the Elysee Palace in honor of the "brethren"); the inquisitive French press, however, failed to get even an inkling of what was discussed at the sessions of the Congress.

The subject, meanwhile, seems worthy of public attention. What is the real place of that clandestine society with its peculiar rites in the capitalist world of the late 20th century? What is its members' attitude to the more important problems of our time? And if they have really adhered to the ternary motto "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" ever since the 1789 French bourgeois revolution, why all their discussions and actions are still shrouded in a thick veil of secrecy?

¹Freemasonry originated in the Middle Ages as a corporation of stonemasons — hence its name.

²*Le Monde*, May 14, 1987.

³The Grand Orient is the main Masonic trend in France.

Dismal despair has more than once given way to shiny hope, and vice versa, in 20th century human history. There were two world wars and between them the victorious Russian revolution without precedent in world history. That revolution raised a huge country from ruins and led to the triumph of socialism. And it was socialism that stood its ground in the battle with Nazism, defended the Soviet Union from the "brown-shirted plague" and, moreover, saved the world from being plunged back into the Dark Ages. The disintegration of colonial empires and fresh opportunities for the development of whole continents were among the repercussions of the victory over Nazism.

Man has harnessed unheard-of power sources. The Soviet sputnik and Yuri Gagarin's space flight ushered in the space age. However, the same scientific breakthroughs made it possible to build deadly weapons which can reduce to ashes all life on the surface of the only known islet of life and intelligence in the Universe.

The world has been living in relative peace for a few decades now but people are uneasy. In the past thirty years the arms race has reached unprecedented proportions and threatens to erupt into outer space. "Star wars" plans and doctrines of military superiority are drawn up to counter peaceful coexistence. Hence the horrid clamoring for the nuclear annihilation of socialism, for Armageddon (according to the Bible, the scene of the final battle between the forces of good and evil where the foes of the "Kingdom of God" will be thrown down into Gehenna and the end of the world will come).

Those sectors of the financial oligarchy which batten on the arms race, on new weapons systems are the more consistent advocates of preparations for the "final solution." Giant monopolies view brinkmanship as an opportunity for reaping fabulous profits, perpetuating their control of society and public mentality, and holding back progress.

The reader may ask what all this has to do with Freemasonry and its place in today's world. A great deal, and this book will show why.

To begin with, Freemasons have always controlled the upper echelons of government in the leading Western countries, such as France, where, as *Le Monde* observed in the context of the Masonic gathering, they enjoyed the patronage of the President

and the Prime Minister representing, respectively, the Socialist and the right wings of the country's political spectrum. Generally speaking, however, France is the center of what is known as the liberal trend of Freemasonry, with the Masonic communities of the Romance-speaking countries of Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America following in its wake.

World Freemasonry, however, is dominated by the conservative trend, its power centers located in the Anglo-Saxon countries. In Britain, considered the cradle of the Masonic "family," Freemasonry enjoys the patronage of the royal dynasty. The London-based center of the Scottish Rite,⁴ for instance, has the power to canonize Masonic lodges in most of the world and to extend recognition to "regular" lodges.

But as for the true center of the world Masonic movement it is to be found in the most "Masonic" country of all, the United States. Most of the US Presidents were Masons, with Franklin and Washington, "the fathers of American democracy," holding the highest Masonic degrees. Truman, Johnson and Ford belonged to the highest echelons of the movement, and Ronald Reagan has been characterized as an "outstanding" Mason. The venerable master of Italy's Propaganda (P-2) Lodge (of which more will be said below), Licio Gelli, was invited as a personal guest to the inaugurations of three US Presidents, Ford, Carter and Reagan.

The Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, the Shah of Iran, presidents of Liberia and Senegal, certain leaders of Turkey, Taiwan and many other countries were linked with Masonry.

What is the total numerical strength of the fraternity? The figures cited on this score vary. *Le Monde* believes that the Anglo-Saxon trend counts some six million acolytes and adds another 300,000 followers of the liberal trend. The *Masonic World Guide*, published in Britain in 1984, only cites some select figures on Scottish Rite Masons in individual countries.⁵ In toto, there are some five million members. The bulk is made up by about three million US and one million British Masons. The *Guide*, how-

⁴ The membership of the Scottish Rite is divided into 33 degrees of "initiation." The organization is based on a host of lodges, whose members can advance no farther than the first three degrees, the "Entered Apprentice," the "Fellow of the Craft" and the "Master Mason." Many of them even do not suspect that there are far higher degrees and that the overall guidance of the lodges is exercised from the top tiers of the structure.

⁵ *Masonic World Guide*, K.W. Henderson, London, Lewis Masonic, 1984.

ever, gives no figures on the number of "brethren" in 62 countries which have Masonic lodges recognized by London. Incidentally, the total number of the lodges, around 34,000, is quite impressive. No figures either are given for Japan, Spain and Yugoslavia, while those cited for some other countries are clearly underestimated. The FRG, for instance, is said to have 21,000 Masons, whereas way back before the Second World War Germany had about 100,000 "brethren." There is information that the West German Masonic lodges unite some 80,000 members. The figures for Portugal, Italy, France, India, Mexico and a number of other countries are underestimated as well. "Irregular" but quite active Masons of the Francophone and Latin-Roman trends, the Black fraternity Prince Hall and other communities are not counted at all. The actual figure must be quite impressive; researchers are led to believe so by the discrepancies in the data supplied by the Masons themselves and by "blanks" for a number of countries. Some papers put the total figure at 30 million, others at 10-12 million.

These statistics are worrying since Masonry is a closed society with a virtually global reach. The numerical strength, impressive as it is, is less important than the character and clout of the organization.

Masonry has a flexible multitiered structure. It can adapt itself to different conditions, ethnic peculiarities, and social and political systems. Sometimes it seems polymorphous to the point of being insubstantial and unreal. It is only when you look deeper into its structure and methods of selecting and educating new members that you realize that the fraternity has a rigid hierarchy and strict discipline, thoroughly screens its membership, and swiftly and efficiently coordinates its activity.

It is in this way that the "pick of the bunch" make it to the top of the Masonic pyramid. These leaders use financial, economic and political levers to control the key posts in the higher echelons of most Western countries and some developing states.

Utmost secrecy enables Masonry to keep out of public view while controlling the nerve centers of today's capitalist society. The outside world—the uninitiated or, as the Masons themselves say, the profanes—get just scraps of doctored information about the fraternity. Moreover, even rank-and-file members learn very little of the major doctrines, principles and programs of the society, and only by word of mouth.

Masonry has a foothold in very different bourgeois parties, which battle publicly in election campaigns, and in this behind-the-scenes way the "brethren" remain (as will be shown below) in the power centers whatever coalition takes the upper hand. The French historian Ran Halévi, who studied the history of French Masonry, notes that by 1789, on the eve of the French Revolution, "Masons were to be found in every camp, the counter-revolutionary and the revolutionary alike, and in every grouping within them."⁶

With the "Masonic guarantee," power seems to change hands but the propertied classes—the rich, the capitalists (after the fall of feudalism)—always remain on top. This ability to manipulate politics and public opinion is very convenient for the ruling circles as a means of coordinating their actions domestically and on the world scene. Masonry has a "liking" for political pluralism, the flexible parliamentary system and the varied mass media, which are just the outward trappings. In this way it can relieve social tensions by surrendering the unimportant. But when the conventional mechanism starts to conk, the trappings of democracy are cast aside and the way is cleared for the direct dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, exercised in one form or another by the ultra-right sectors of society.

Masonry in fact runs, "remotely controls" bourgeois society, which its ideologists and politicians are fond of praising as open, free and democratic. The world bourgeoisie finds the organization with its clandestine, arcane ways very convenient in secretly shaping the more covert aspects of its domestic and foreign policies.

"In capitalist society everything that particularly interests the citizens—their economic conditions, war and peace—is decided secretly, apart from society itself," Lenin noted. "The most important questions—war, peace, diplomatic questions—are decided by a small handful of capitalists, who deceive not only the masses, but very often parliament itself."⁷ The leader of the world's first state of workers and peasants stressed that the greatest manifestation of democracy was to be found in the key question of war and peace. It is in utmost secrecy that major world conflicts are brewing. They ruin the best achievements of civi-

⁶ *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 30 January-5 February 1987, p. 71.

⁷ V.I. Lenin, "Ninth Congress of the R.C.P.(B.), March 29-April 5, 1920," *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 488.

lization and claim millions of lives. Their preparation and execution is greatly helped by the existence of secret headquarters and closed elite societies and clubs.

And what can the public know of those mechanisms if, the structure of Masonry being what it is, even the Masonic grassroots have no idea of what is being done "upstairs"?!

Masonry attracted such brilliant thinkers of the past as Rousseau, Voltaire, Diderot, Goethe and Lessing, the musicians of genius Mozart and Beethoven, outstanding scientists Newton and Boyle. The ideas of liberty proclaimed by it inspired Byron, Pushkin, the Russian Decembrists, Garibaldi, Mazzini, Bolivar, Juarez and many others.

Any student of the history of Freemasonry comes against many questions. In what way has the movement within a short span of history reached the top of the economic and political power structure? How has it abandoned its slogans of liberty and democracy of the earlier centuries and evolved to the apology of the diktat of Big Business and the worst forms of violence and disrespect for human dignity born of it?

Answers to those questions will help understand why the fraternity is so secretive about everything that could throw light on its doctrines, rites and ways of promotion and why the Masons, holding up slogans that are appealing to the general public, keep the inner workings of their organization under wraps.

Anyone wishing to learn something about Masonry is bound to come against formidable difficulties. "The investigator has to face the problem of organized secrecy," Stephen Knight says in his book *The Brotherhood*. He cites the text of the communication released above the signature of Earl Cadogan, President of the Brotherhood's Board of General Purposes, on June 10, 1981, which instructs all the members of the fraternity as follows: "If therefore any of you is approached by any reporter ... you will only be carrying out our practice if you gently decline to comment." That reporter must have been Knight himself, who at that time approached some of the prominent British Masons with a request for information for his book. The communication continued: "We have nothing to hide and certainly nothing to be ashamed of, but we object to having our affairs investigated by outsiders... We have found that silence is the best practice." It furthermore quoted the Masons' Ancient Charge

"Behavior in Presence of Strangers, Not Masons" as saying: "You shall be cautious in your words and carriage, that the most penetrating stranger shall not be able to discover or find out what is not proper to be intimated; and sometimes you shall divert a discourse, and manage it prudently for the honor of the worshipful fraternity."⁸

If one takes into account another principle which one of Knight's Masonic interlocutors formulated far less politely — "pearls must not be thrown before swine" — one should not be surprised that those standing "before the temple" (from the Latin *pro fane*), or most people, including the readers, know about Masonry only as much as its leaders let them know.

Misinformation is among their major resorts. Some of the Masons, Stephen Knight notes, agreed to talk to him but clearly fed him lies so as, should he take the bait, to compromise him and his study of Masonry. Even more underhand methods are employed. Knight, for instance, was threatened and offered bribes to prevent him from publishing his book. The publishers who had signed a contract with him later backed out. When other publishers released the book, strenuous efforts to the point of buying up the print were made to keep it away from the reading public.⁹

That story illustrates the obstacles in the way of those who try to get an insight into Masonry, which is a very complex and controversial phenomenon. As for publications on that sensitive subject, most of them are penned by Masons themselves, who, naturally, have to have the sanction of the society's leaders. There are tens of thousands of books and articles which describe the Masons and their activities exclusively in the positive light and therefore give a one-sided view of them.¹⁰ On the other hand, many authors stoop to misrepresentation and downright lies to paint the Masons black (or red, as rebels and revolutionary plotters, depending on the political persuasions of the authors themselves).

The present book relies on studies done by researchers in different countries and publications in the Soviet and Western

⁸ Stephen Knight, *The Brotherhood. The Secret World of the Freemasons*, Granada, London, 1984, pp. 5, 7-8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁰ Stephen Knight, for instance, estimates that around 50,000 publications about Masonry had been put out by 1950.

press. The author's purpose was to gain the fullest possible idea of this phenomenon and to understand through what stages it passed to emerge onto the world scene so broadly and what circumstances helped toward its assertion.

Yet the shroud of secrecy and the "self-censorship" of Masonic sources would have most likely prevented a thorough analysis of the nature of today's Masonry if certain events of the recent past had not lifted the veil from the face of Isis, so to speak, and given an insight into some of the cherished secrets of the "Builders of the World Temple".

To begin with, the exposed conspiracy of Italy's Propaganda-2 (P-2) Lodge caused the first ever parliamentary investigation into the specific characteristics, socio-political concepts, methods and activities of Masonry. What is especially important, the investigation revealed or, rather, outlined, the contours of world-wide Masonic solidarity and links between the national organizations and higher-up bodies. The involvement of Masonry in many grave crimes perpetrated in Italy, from attempted coups to acts of terrorism, was traced in a court investigation of the more criminal operations of the P-2 Lodge.

A good deal has been left hidden, of course, and immense forces in the top echelons of several political parties, the banking community, the army, the judiciary and the procurator's office were mobilized to suppress the truth. The US "brothers" lent a hand as well: a delegation of influential American Masons paid a visit to Italy and charged the Italian government with violations of "human rights."

But what evidence has come to light is enough to go over from guesses to conclusions based on hard facts. Such conclusions are important because the collective profile of the P-2 Lodge gives a good idea of a large segment of the top echelons of world Masonry.

The events in Italy therefore opened a window on the secrets of the Masonic world. Let us take a look at them.

THE PYRAMID THAT TUMBLED DOWN ON ITALY

On the night of March 18, 1981, police investigators, following court orders, carried out a routine search in the Italian township of Castiglione Fibocchi. They were looking for papers which could throw light on the shady dealings of the Sicilian banker Michele Sindona. The banker himself was in the US, in detention pending trial on charges of complicity in a fraudulent bankruptcy of the Franklin National Bank, N.Y. The trace of the criminal operations involved led to Italy. The police searched the office of Sindona's friend Licio Gelli, Venerable Master of the P-2 Masonic Lodge. The search did not turn up any documents related to Sindona's affairs but the police took away some lists of names with figures of donations and numbers of membership cards marked against each. The investigators did not think much of them but when Prime Minister Forlani had a look at those papers, he was aghast. Those documents were far more explosive than any evidence of Sindona's fraud: they were the membership lists of the P-2 Lodge.

Forlani thought hard before making them public. He knew that a government crisis could well ensue: among the P-2 members there were three ministers from the three ruling parties, the Christian Democrats, the Social Democrats and the Socialists, the President's aide Nicola Picella, chiefs of ministers' offices and dozens of MP's. The list of some thousand names included those of all the Italian secret service chiefs, General Santovito (SISMI, Defense Ministry), General Grassini (SISDE, Interior Ministry) and General Pelosi (CESIS, Secret Service Coordinating Committee), their deputies and two former chiefs of SISMI (or SID, as it was known in the past), generals Maletti and Miceli. The latter, who had since become an MP from the neofascist party, had more than once been arraigned at court

on charges of connivance at conspiracies aimed at establishing in Italy a military-fascist dictatorship like the one in Greece. More than that, there were the names of chiefs of the "financial guard," responsible for control of smuggling and financial abuses, and also those of senior officials of the Procurator General's Office and the Italian courts complete with Carmelo Spagnuolo, Procurator General of the Italian Republic.¹

Then followed the names of bankers, leading industrialists and managers of state enterprises, in short, the economic elite of Italy. The country's major economic ministries were amply represented in the P-2 Lodge as well: 67 officials from the treasury, 52 from the finance ministry, 21 from the ministry for state participation, and 13 from the ministry of industry and commerce. The Masons took special care about the agencies concerned with hard currency operations; they were fully controlled by P-2.

The foreign ministry, too, was represented by a high-powered group, led by the ministry's General Secretary Francesco Malfatti and the chief accountant. It meant that Gelli was effectively in control of the finances and personnel of Italian diplomacy!

But it was the military that came on top: the defense ministry was represented in the lodge by 152 senior officials and 195 officers, colonels, generals and admirals and just one captain. Their names rang the bell immediately: Admiral Torrisi, Chief of Naval Operations in the late 1970s, was in 1980-1981 Chief of Staff of the Defense Ministry, and Admiral Birindelli commanded the NATO naval forces!

All of them had one feature in common: none could be said to have let the grass grow under his feet. Their names cropped up every now and then in hearings into attempted coups d'état. Politically they leaned to the far right, while Birindelli, like Miceli, was a member of the neofascist Italian Social Movement and had been elected from "Missini" (as the fascists are called diminutively in Italy) to Parliament. The Italian parliamentary commission which investigated the P-2 activities concluded that the lodge grouped top-ranking military officers and figures who played a central part in developments of special importance, including those of a subversive nature. The list found by the police

¹ On Gelli's orders, incidentally, Spagnuolo made attempts to secure Sindona's release, but the US court sentenced him to 25 years in prison. He died of poisoning in March 1986.

was incomplete and Gelli himself said in an interview to *L'Espresso* on July 10, 1976, that the total membership of the lodge was 2,400, although later he tried to retract that figure. It is believed that at the peak of its activity the lodge had 3,000 members.

The lodge itself was run as a headquarters for the comprehensive administration of the country. It was subdivided into 17 or 18 specialist sectors which could control all the vital national activities. That pyramid, which effectively laid claim to governing the country, can by no means be ranked with any network of common lodges through which the Masonic movement operates in various countries. It is a special institution and its statutes were formulated—a hundred years ago. It was in 1885 that banker Adriano Lemmi, the Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Italy, established the Masonic Lodge “Propaganda Duo,” so called supposedly after an ancient lodge in Alexandria, Egypt.

P-2 was conceived as a closed, secret lodge with a special purpose. This is what Gelli’s collaborator Pier Carpi, another P-2 member, said in his book *Gelli’s Case*: “The Lodge unites Masons in Italy and other countries who, by virtue of their status in society, their prominence, and the importance and sensitivity of their social functions, form the elite both in Freemasonry and in their states.”²

Carpi did not describe the purpose of the lodge, but it seems clear. Such lodges (and they operate in other countries as well) are the leaders, the “apple of the eye” in Carpi’s term. Their aim is to control the policies of those countries and to influence their major decisions. In other words, if they grow to such proportions as P-2, they can effectively usurp power.

Only the Grand Master, the Masonic leader in the given country, knows the names of the members of such “super lodges.” New members are only accepted at the discretion of the Grand Master by way of a special rite performed without any witnesses. Such initiation is called “on the sword’s edge” or “in the Master’s ear,” and the members are known as “brothers in memory.” They do not know all the membership, while the influential members are only known to the Grand Master or to a person deputizing for him. Licio Gelli was such a deputy, who

² Pier Carpi, *Il caso Gelli*, INEI, Bologna, 1982, p. 128.

virtually pushed aside the Grand Master and the Supreme Council of the Grand Orient of Italy.

Before we turn to the history of Gelli's rise to power, it is natural to ask if that case was something of an exception from the common Masonic practice. In other words, would it be correct to draw general conclusions about international Freemasonry as a whole on the strength of an analytical cross-section of the P-2 Lodge and the investigation of its shady and downright criminal operations?

There have been statements by leaders of Italian Masonry, including Armando Corona, Grand Master of the past few years, that Gelli's lodge was "heretical" and that it violated the rules laid down by the Masonic scriptures. Moreover, in December 1974 the Italian lodges decreed to dissolve Gelli's lodge. However, in May next year it was restored by Grand Master Lino Salvini and put under his immediate command. "It remains agreed that this lodge will have nationwide jurisdiction and that its brethren will not figure in the official lists of the Grand Orient of Italy," Gelli wrote to the Grand Master at the time.

In March 1981, when the names of the lodge members had become known to the government and the risk of public exposure was quite real, spokesmen of all the 620 Italian lodges voiced their trust in P-2 and stated that they saw no aberrations in its practices. Their "denunciation" seemed a self-defense maneuver rather than a position of principle.

That was why the Italian parliamentary commission, which included representatives of virtually all the constitutional parties of the country, later concluded, with reference to the aberrations of P-2, that it was not merely a closed lodge but a secret society and that, moreover, it was a Masonic lodge functioning under the rules of secrecy prescribed by Masonry.

Commenting on this conclusion, the authors of the document made the following statement, which is important to the overall understanding of Masonry and its place in contemporary society.

"These deliberations lead us to the heart of the problem and make it possible to view the question of the closed nature of Masonry in a broader context, including the role that this organization can play legally in a democratic society.

"As regards the content of the Masonic doctrines themselves such as the well-known ternary motto Liberty-Equality-Frater-

nity, one cannot help observing that the forms in which secrecy is cultivated poorly agree with it.

"One of the two conclusions holds: either the moral cement of the association is legal – and the rights guaranteed by the Constitution to all citizens preclude any secrecy – or the association has a different rationale, is fettered to secret precepts, is itself secret and has no place in the present social structure."

The commission's conclusions, applicable to every manifestation of Masonry, naturally were not prohibitive. So Italian Masonry, having made a "facelift" and transferred some of the "brethren" from the "criminal" to regular lodges, continues to thrive. But the moral and ethical aspects of the parliamentary commission's conclusions are more important than the legal ones, and are immediately related to politics. Masonry, if we judge by the documents cited in the Introduction, inscribed on its banner the great words Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Human Rights. It thus raised aloft the banner of supreme human values and posed as a champion of democracy – but at closer quarters there seems to be in it an inescapable contradiction between the avowed goals and the inner structure and postulates. That flaw in the body of Masonry was observed in the past too by many people who had begun by following its precepts unquestioningly and enthusiastically.

Licio Gelli, the architect of P-2, was born in Pistoia, Tuscany; the capital of that region, Florence, was the birthplace of Italy's first contemporary Masonic lodge. When a young man, Gelli had nothing to do with the Masonic movement. He was expelled from school for poor academic progress and for being rude to a teacher. An enthusiastic supporter of Mussolini, he signed up with the corps of fascist volunteers and fought in the Civil War in Spain (1936-1939). He spent less than a year in Spain, carefully avoiding action, but nevertheless published a cheap book entitled *Fuoco! Cronache legionarie della insurrezione antibolscevica di Spagna* (Fire! A Legionary's Chronicle of the Anti-Bolshevik Uprising in Spain). Promoted to an officer's rank, he took part in Mussolini's imperial conquests in Albania and Yugoslavia. When the fascist regime in Italy collapsed in 1943, Gelli surfaced in the north of the country, where the puppet "Republic of Salò" was established at the bidding of the invading Hitler troops. Information about that period of his activity is rather controversial. On the one hand, there is evidence of

his part in ruthless reprisals against patriots, participants in the Italian Resistance. On the other, anticipating the end of the German occupation, Gelli went out of his way to show his readiness to help the guerrillas so as to earn the reputation of a "friend." He lost no time either to establish contact with the Americans, and in October 1944 fascist officer Licio Gelli turned over a new leaf: he began cooperating with the counterintelligence service of the US 5th Army in Italy. His record at that time is very spotty as he weaved through Northern Italy and Sardinia fearing the guerrillas' vengeance. Eventually he reached Argentina and made contact with fugitive fascists and also with followers of the future dictator Perón. Having returned to Italy in 1948, he became an informer of Italian secret services. At the same time he tried his hand now in steel, now in book trade in a bid to develop a "commercial base." He became intimate with a deputy of the ruling Christian Democratic Party, sold mattresses of the Permaflex and Dormire companies and, using his access to the Americans, arranged for those companies lucrative deals with NATO bases in Italy. Then he moved to Arezzo and won the confidence of the Lebole Brothers, owners of a large textile mill. He was appointed the personnel manager of that mill, came into money and bought a luxury villa. It was rumored that Gelli, who had in the war guarded the gold reserves of the Yugoslav kings, had squirrelled away something for himself. According to other rumors, he had siphoned off some money from the orders placed with the "mattress" firms.

From time to time secret services tried to get to his past and to the sources of his prosperity. But virtually all those who attempted such investigations ended up badly. Captain Rossi, according to the parliamentary commission findings, "took his life, apparently after having been threatened by Gelli." Colonel Florio, who also attempted such an investigation, was victimized by his superiors and then got killed in an absurd traffic accident. Only Major De Salvo made a career — because he joined the re-established P-2 Lodge.

Gelli had grown strong and skillfully parried any danger. A one-time informer, he became an influential and dangerous figure. He was dangerous even to those who supported him but knew his record. For instance, Mario Lebole, head of the firm which had prospered but then went bankrupt because of Gelli's swindles, committed suicide. But Gelli himself, the focus of all

those clearly criminal affairs and troubles, seemed unsinkable to the last. There were many guesses about the causes of his rise but just two interdependent ones deserve mention. Gelli with his enterprise, guile and cheek won the favor of his old friends from the US Army counterintelligence service, who had gone to work for the CIA. They decided that he had promise and offered him to join the Masons so as quickly to climb up the ladder and gain influence.

The link between two phenomena, the American intelligence community and Italian Masonry (or rather European Masonry because the idea was to have the traditional European Masonic movement restructured and subordinated to the US Masonic organizations) is laid bare if we view the problem in the context of the struggle launched by the Americans for a foothold in Western Europe, especially in its southern part.

The Mediterranean, lying at the juncture of three continents, became a strategic priority as a frontline of confrontation with the Soviet Union, which had been viewed as a potential adversary already during the Second World War. Truman, for instance, was of the opinion that the United States should assist now one side, now the other in the world conflict ("... and that way let them kill as many as possible...") so as to weaken first and foremost the Soviet Union, which was bearing the brunt of the war effort. The importance of the region grew also with the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the establishment of the State of Israel, already perceived as a US "strategic ally" in the Middle East astride the sea lanes to the Indian Ocean.

Washington viewed the decline of the conservative forces in Southern Europe and the growing influence of left parties in Italy and neighboring France as an obstacle to its plans. The objective that began to be formulated more and more imperatively in secret estimates and documents produced by the headquarters of US foreign policy expansion, the National Security Council, was to divide and weaken the left forces and, whenever possible, physically to suppress them, as was being done in Greece.

The following extracts from two NSC documents, declassified in the 1970s, are a good illustration of that strategy.

NSC document 1/2 of February 10, 1948, read, inter alia: "The basic objective of the United States in Italy is to establish and

maintain in that key country conditions favorable to our national security... Italy's position in the Mediterranean dominates the lines of communication to the East and flanks the Balkan countries. From bases located in Italy it is possible for the power holding them to control Mediterranean traffic between Gibraltar and Suez, and to apply substantial air force against any point in the Balkans or surrounding area..." To this end the US should be ready to "make full use of its political, economic and, if necessary, military power." Plans of extended "rearguard action" in pursuit of those objectives were detailed and modified along with the establishment of NATO to match the dynamics of the Italian and French situations. They provided for the subversion of the left forces from within, for the instigation of splits in democratic organizations, for bribery, for the establishment of company unions, for financing anti-Communist parties and organizations, etc. Special emphasis was laid on actions "by proxy" to compromise the left forces, to scare the mass of people and make them disbelieve parliamentary democracy and hanker for a "strong hand." Fascist thugs infiltrated leftist organizations with the help of the Italian secret services, and terrorist groupings were formed. The overall lead was that successive strikes by "Red" and "Black" terrorists would eventually compel the armed forces and neofascists to step in and carry out a coup. A successful coup in Italy, along with the surviving fascist regimes in Spain and Portugal, would make it possible to put up a dependable Washington-backed shield. The United States and Israel would be in a position to control the Mediterranean and easily to operate against the national liberation movements in Arab and African countries.

All those factors made Italy a target of the "strategy of tension," that is, a series of successive actions to destabilize the situation in the country that were coordinated from across the ocean. Masonry was to support those operations both on the right and on the pseudo-left flank and to ensure their secrecy. It was the Italian Masonic lodges that provided the best guarantee of secrecy and effective tactics, with everyone going his own way but in the same direction as the others.

In 1944 the US secret services drew up a plan for possible subversive operations under the flag of Masonry. The US Office of Strategic Services said in its document 9a 32199 of September 15, 1944, that the Italian right forces were seeking a Masonic

cover for the terrorist groupings which would be set on discrediting the Italian Communist Party. A network of agents built in Italy by Colonel Max Corvo and other American intelligence officers was being mobilized to help those forces.

Italian Masonry, however, had to be restructured before it could be given those assignments. In 1925 Mussolini had banned Masonry in Italy, and some of the movement's leaders had fallen victim to persecution. It is a less known fact, however, that persecution was directed only against the liberal wing of Italian Masonry, known by the name of its residence as the Grand Orient of the Justinian Palace. Mussolini took over that ancient palace in Rome and put up his offices in it.

The right wing of Italian Masonry called itself the Piazza of Jesus Masons. They had broken away from the Justinian Palace in 1908, had a patently reactionary platform and united big landowners and aristocrats with links to the Vatican. Many of them were fascists. Unlike their liberal brethren, the Piazza of Jesus Masons welcomed Mussolini's rise to power. The rout of fascism and the victory of the antifascist forces in Europe, including Italy, detracted from the Piazza of Jesus Masons' position and influence.

To adapt the fraternity to its purposes and to make it influential and efficient, the United States had to help the Justinians get back onto their feet, while purging their leadership of the "radicals," who leaned toward the left (specifically the Socialists, who at that time had a pact of unity of action with the Communists). Factors to be reckoned with included also the historical anti-Catholic bias of the Justinian Palace Masons and their antifascist sentiments, strengthened by years of persecution. Since the collapse of fascism in Italy had left what Washington considered a political vacuum, it was deemed necessary to unite all the forces which could act against the Communists. These forces should include the Vatican with its age-old art of influencing the mass of people. Hence the need to reconcile and unite the Justinian Palace and the Piazza of Jesus Masons, thus softening up the anticlerical bias of some of the Masonic lodges.

That sensitive and complex mission was given to the US intelligence service. One of the reasons for the choice was that the Office of Strategic Services and its successor, the Central Intelligence Agency, always had among their senior and middle-level functionaries people bound by the Masonic pledges. OSS

chief William ("Bill") Donovan was high in the hierarchy of the Scottish Rite and the Dulles brothers and many other CIA men also belonged to Masonic lodges.

The operation was coordinated by Frank Gigliotti, a Protestant pastor and a Mason, who headed the OSS Italian section. Way back during the war he had gone through the membership of the Masonic lodges of New York and other American cities to spot people who could eventually be used in sensitive posts in Italy's government and Masonry (his Italian extraction was an asset in that task). One of the persons hand-picked by Gigliotti was Randolfo Pacciardi, former commander of the Italian republican volunteer forces in Spain (Pacciardi and Gelli fought on the opposite sides in that war). Pacciardi's one-time antifascism did not discourage either Gigliotti or his masters (it should be remembered that the Second World War was still going on at the time): what they were happy about were his extreme anti-Communist views. He was to become the defense minister in successive postwar governments, the spearhead of fierce anti-Soviet campaigns and a champion of Italy's entry into NATO. The former antifascist ended up as the neofascist and ultra-right nominee for the role of dictator. His political movement, known as the New Republic, intended to carry out a military coup and scrap the democratic institutions won by Italy in the Resistance battles against fascism.

A similarly notorious figure was Publio Cortini, Grand Master and a US spy, who did his utmost to put Italian Masonry in the service of American interests. Another Mason of note, although of a lesser caliber, was Sicilian Lupis, later a cabinet minister.

Gigliotti was likely to know of Gelli's cooperation with the Americans. At that point, however, he preferred the well-established Masonic leaders. Although the rival Piazza of Jesus lodges, swarming with fascists, kept informing on their "brethren" from the Grand Orient, warning the Americans that it was teeming with "Reds," in 1947 Gigliotti secured recognition for the Justinians by the most prestigious US Masonic organization, the Northern Jurisdiction. The Justinian Palace, confiscated by the fascists, was returned to the Masons: that operation was carried out with the help of Masons from the "Agitation Committee" set up in the US by Gigliotti, and also the US Ambassador to Rome, James Zellerbach, himself a high-ranking Mason. The

Americans used finance minister Giuseppe Trabucchi, another Mason, to pay a tidy sum as rent for the palace and in 1960 installed the "brethren" in their former residence.

Neither did the Americans neglect the Piazza of Jesus lodges and secured for them recognition by another US Masonic organization, the Southern Jurisdiction. In the same year of 1960 the leadership of the Justinian Lodge merged with the Supreme Council of the Serenest Grand Lodge of Alam (as the Piazza of Jesus Masons' organization was officially called), led by the Sicilian prince Giovanni Alliata di Montereale (who later took part in the fascist conspiracy of Junio Valerio Borghese, in the Wind Rose conspiracy, and also in contacts with the Sicilian Mafia and its mercenary Giuliano).

The united Italian Masons were recognized by both jurisdictions of US Masonry, and thus became indebted, as it were, to their North American counterparts.

"The Americans, first and foremost Masons linked to the Mafia and the CIA, now had in hand the future of Italy's Grand Orient Lodge," Gianni Rossi and Francesco Lombrassa said in their book *In the Name of the Lodge*. "As a result, they were in a position, just as in the early postwar years, anonymously to use Masonic channels to influence political decision-making in Italy. To this end, however, they had to isolate the historical socialist and anticlerical component within Masonry, to engineer the Masons' rapprochement with the Catholic Church, and also to develop an effective tool of control and pressure that would reach the highest and most secret councils of Masonry. The P-2 Lodge became such a tool."³

It was necessary to choose the right man to head that lodge. Grand Masters did not fit the ticket: their strength had been sapped by intrigues, so characteristic of relations between the "brethren," squabbles over money and conflicts between the now merged factions. What was needed was an energetic double-faced Janus, who could quickly cobble together a subversive lodge.

The Americans chose Gelli. It was their choice because he could have hardly risen through the ranks with lightning speed without outside help, just according to the laws of Masonry. Gelli became a Mason as late as 1965: his role in the repression of

³ Gianni Rossi, Francesco Lombrassa, *In nome della "Loggia"*, Rome, 1981, p. 20.

guerrillas and his services to Mussolini and the Hitlerites were not overlooked and some of the "brethren" insisted that his candidature be "put on ice." But the next year Grand Master Gamberini (also linked to the CIA) advanced Gelli, still an apprentice (the first rank in the Masonic hierarchy), into the secret lodge Hod as a man capable of making a "contribution" to the cause.

The unusual procedure and patronage augured an unusual career, and it indeed was anything but ordinary.

In 1969 Gelli was given the task of cementing together all the communities of Italian Masonry, which only Gigliotti had been previously able to accomplish. In 1970 he was made responsible for Masonic publications. What was more, he was given the function that had been the prerogative of the Grand Master, namely, liaison with foreign Masonic organizations and the CIA.

In 1971 Gelli was made the managing secretary of the ancient Propaganda Lodge, which began to be called the "Gelli Group P-2." The post, incidentally, did not figure in the Masonic statutes. The newly promoted leader acquired unlimited powers speedily to accept new members and form his lodge. Gelli staged initiation ceremonies in Hotel Excelsior in the heart of Rome, and Grand Master Gamberini was present to give luster to the procedure.

The new head of Italy's Grand Orient, Lino Salvini, was visibly worried by the rush of ranking army officers into the "Gelli Group P-2." He hinted to the "brethren" that the "upstart" was most likely hatching a military coup in the country, and he was right.

In December 1971 Gelli integrated the Hod Lodge he had purged by that time with the newly recruited P-2 members, and stated that the Italian Communist Party was posing a threat, that the "clerico-Communists" were very likely to gain power and that for this reason it was necessary to draw up "a plan for introducing the state of emergency" in the country.

In 1972 Gelli circulated a memo among the lodge members extorting them "to cast aside philosophy," that is, conventional discussions on the sacraments and doctrines of Masonry, and get down to important practical problems that were relevant to Italy's life.

Later that year the lodge set up a Center of Contemporary Historical Studies, which in effect was to coordinate manipula-

tion of Italian politics. The center was headquartered in via Condotti, at the same floor as the Maltese Order (the extensive links between P-2 and the Order will be discussed below). The lodge started a news agency, Osservatore Politico (OP), headed by the secret service General Nicola Falde and actually managed by journalist Mino Pecorelli. Conceived as the mouthpiece of the Masonic lodges, the agency was used to send special signals to the "brethren" and, drawing on the files that Italian secret services kept on tens of thousands of people and which had mysteriously fallen into Gelli's hands, to harass and blackmail politicians.

P-2 rapidly expanded and Gelli established new contacts abroad, for instance, in Argentina. He helped Perón regain power, became a family friend and made the acquaintance of Lopez Rega, the mystic and sadist who was close to Perón's wife Isabelita and contributed to the formation of "death squads" in Argentina. Gelli was entrusted with the Peróns' family wealth, made a counsellor of the Argentine Embassy in Rome, and the P-2 Lodge opened its arms to the more reactionary Argentine brass, including Admiral Massera and generals Mason and Corte. They were followed by officers and diplomats of Brazil and some other Latin American countries, among them the Uruguayan dictator Alvarez. Eventually Gelli became head of the World Masonic Assistance Organization (OMPAM).

Meanwhile, he scored another victory in Italy by bringing together both wings of Masonry and laying his hands on a secret Piazza of Jesus lodge, Justice and Liberty. The more important members of that lodge, who had gone over to Gelli's side, were Banker Sindona and Procurator General Spagnuolo. P-2 had now absorbed nearly 10 percent of the entire Grand Orient membership.

Grand Master Salvini was now given a back seat. Trying to counter Gelli's influence, he established his own secret lodge, "Propaganda-1"—but none other than Licio Gelli became its Senior Warden (the Masonic rank carrying the powers of control).

Salvini then attempted to use the displeasure of some of the Masons with Gelli's dictatorial ways, with the militarist and pro-fascist character of his activities and with his taste for conspiracies and terrorism.

Indeed, in December 1970 Gelli personally directed the fascist putsch of Borghese, whose men burst into the premises of the Italian Ministry of the Interior, seized weapons and were about to occupy Rome's TV center and proclaim a dictatorship. He personally called off the putschists, too. As a matter of fact, Gelli, General Miceli, head of the Italian secret services, and those who were behind the "strategy of tension" realized how important it was to preserve the strike forces of Italian fascists so that they could be used effectively at some later stage.

The fascists and army people, who abounded in Gelli's lodge, were important not in themselves but as a tool of attaining certain political goals, such as the thwarting of the rapprochement of the Catholics and the Communists in the country, the removal of the Christian Democratic leader Aldo Moro, one of the chief architects of that move, and a shift to the right in the whole of the country. Manipulating the threat of a coup, the Gelli lodge held back the reformers and tried to check and reverse the shift to the left that had started in the country.

The years 1968-1971 saw an upsurge of the youth and working class movement in Western Europe. Barricades were put up in Paris, and young people occupied university campuses in Rome and other Italian cities. Demonstrators clashed with police. Sometimes church leaders joined the movement, protesting against the ruling elite and the reactionary Vatican faction and advocating "a church for the poor."

That upheaval, in many ways spontaneous, came as a surprise to the left parties. It involved large numbers of students who had been inert or even right-wing, young people from the middle classes and even children of wealthy Italian families. The latter were especially hot-headed, demanding that the entire system of schools and universities be crushed as a "menial of capitalism" and that the governments, "servitors of transnationals," be overthrown. Young people went to the extremes of setting cars and buses on fire, and breaking into weapons shops and one got the impression that a rebellion was about to break out.

Despite the frills of anti-capitalist rhetoric, the actions taken by the left extremists had enough ammunition for the right forces, which would like to exploit the tide of the more outrageous actions to compromise the Communists and the Socialists and to generate a right countertide. "To teach the Reds a lesson," groups of neofascists trained in karate, kung-fu and

judo, and other rightists "changed their sports," joined in ultra-left excesses and provoked riots and attacks on police.

The more outrageous and savage acts of terrorism bore the signs of behind-the-scenes orchestration. One characteristic example was a bomb blast in the bank of Milan in December 1969, which killed or wounded about 100 innocent people. The police arrested the "organizers," Valpreda, a former dancer at the Rome TV studios, and railroad worker Pinelli, both members of anarchist groups. Pinelli was interrogated "under duress" and then inadvertently "fell out" of a window of the police headquarters. The taxi driver, who identified Valpreda as the man he had taken to the bank, also met with a sudden death. Newspapers reported that Valpreda's group had among its members one Mario Merlino. It was a telltale revelation because Merlino, a fanatic neofascist, could not have had anything to do with the anarchists. Shortly before the Milan bomb blast, Merlino and some other hit men of the neofascist party had travelled to Greece, where they had been briefed by the "Black Colonels."

Later Pinelli, who had "taken his life," was posthumously exonerated, and Valpreda was released from detention. The act of provocation, it turned out, had been planned and carried out by men trained by Italian and NATO secret services: the neofascist Stefano Delle Chiaie obtained explosives from a NATO base and Franco Freda, a neofascist activist, a racist and an admirer of the SS, had received timers from a similar source. Afterwards Italian secret services arranged safe passage abroad for all the principal members of the terrorist group and the informers linked to it who faced arrest. Delle Chiaie shuttled between Spain, France, Angola, Chile and Bolivia, alternatively training terrorist groups and helping with drugs trafficking, and from time to time had meetings with Italian secret service agents.

Another strange death was that of the multimillionaire publisher Feltrinelli, whose name was associated with the birth of the Red Brigades. That scion of one of the wealthiest Milanese families and a one-time admirer of the Duce readily changed his political affiliations. For instance, he gave up his Communist Party membership and "went underground to make a revolution." "Unexpectedly" he was blown up by a mine with which he had planned to wreck a power transmission line. Someone had exploited his myopia (the eccentric multimillionaire wore

glasses with the thickest possible lenses) and moved forward the hand of the timer device. It seemed that someone needed to "neutralize" the unpredictable Feltrinelli to forge his amateurish group into a terrorist organization so as to manipulate it without hindrance.

Those "strange" and "unexpected" developments already bore signs of the true role of the P-2 lodge, which had brought together the masterminds of terrorism and the generals whose responsibility was to fight terrorism, the bankers involved in currency smuggling and other shady deals and the heads of the *guardia di finanza* (fiscal board), who were to catch them. So there were "cops and robbers," just as in a well-known Italian film, but they were linked by a very strong bond, the Masonic oath. Gelli's "subversive lodge" was behind many actions: his people directed right-wing conspiracies like the Borghese putsch or the Wind Rose plot.

The Italian for the Wind Rose, *Rosa dei Venti*, also means "a group of twenty." That intricately organized conspiracy relied first on twenty and then on twenty-four groups, and was led, among others, by generals Ricci and Nardella, members of the P-2 lodge. It was based on a NATO plan drawn up to handle an "emergency" caused by "left actions." The idea was to cut Rome off the industrial north with the help of elite troops linked to NATO bases (specifically, the 3rd Army Corps and Ricci's tank regiment), to behead the left parties and the trade unions, to dissolve parliament and to establish a military dictatorship in the country.

Action was to be sparked off by armed operations of P-2 agents provocateur against army troops in the north of Italy. The explosion of the Italicus train in August 1974, which claimed numerous human lives, was intended to incite public opinion. It was engineered by Gelli's men through the fascist Mason Tito Signorelli, who advocated the merger of the extreme left and extreme right forces in pursuit of the single goal of destabilizing the situation in Italy. The action was carried out by his group Third Position. Another attempt to provoke the Army into action was the attack on Italian Prime Minister Mariano Rumor in Milan in May 1973, when the Israeli-trained terrorist Bertoli threw a grenade into the crowd during the unveiling of a monument to the Police Commissioner Luigi Calabresi, who had interrogated Pinelli and had been killed by the terrorists. Several

people were wounded but the Prime Minister survived the attack.

Simultaneously, the CIA agent Edgardo Sogno, once infiltrated into the Italian guerrilla movement, was hatching a "white strike" conspiracy in Turin. He also was a member of the P-2 lodge. After the war, Sogno was forming, on Allen Dulles' instructions, company unions in Italy and setting up subversive organizations, such as Peace and Liberty and the Committee to Resist Democracy. His services were paid for not just by the Central Intelligence Agency but also by the Italian monopolies, specifically Fiat, at whose enterprises Sogno succeeded in damaging worker unity and weakening genuine working class organizations.

It was planned that Sogno would abduct the Italian President Giovanni Leone and force him to dissolve parliament and establish a government headed by the fascist Mason Pacciardi. The putsch was conceived by its organizers as a fierce, merciless lightning strike. In the course of that "bloodless coup" (as Sogno's conspiracy was later characterized in the trial which exonerated him because the judges had been handpicked by the P-2 lodge) some 2,000 politicians and labor leaders were to be physically annihilated.

In addition to armed actions and fascist activities, the P-2 conspirators set out to restructure terrorist groups and subordinate them to Gelli (i.e., the CIA) and his purposes. The Red Brigades were one of their targets. Colonel Amos Spiazzi, a member of the P-2 lodge and a party to the above conspiracies, later told the court that his agent, one Fumagalli, had been infiltrated, like Sogno, into the guerrilla movement, had formed the first Red Brigades at the plants of the Pirelli rubber company and engineered arson attempts and bomb blasts at Pirelli and Fiat plants and on railroads in northern Italy. Those agents provocateur were supplied with explosives and weapons from NATO bases and given 20 million lire to organize attacks on army troops and border guards. Those assassinations were made to look as if they were committed by the "Reds" so that they should signal a simultaneous action by troops loyal to the right forces and the "Ordine nero" and "Avanguardia nazionale" fascist groups against the progressive forces of the country.

Some of the weapons for the Red Brigades were smuggled in from France by the Templars, a Masonic community of French

high-ranking police and secret service officers organized along the lines of Gelli's lodge. Gelli himself was responsible for shipping weapons into Italy and handing them out to trusted Red Brigade activists.

The Masons themselves were worried by the persistent rumors of Gelli's preparations for a military coup. His actions were so large-scale that the "brethren" could no longer neglect them. That was why at the Masonic conference in Naples in late 1974 Salvini put through the decision to dissolve the P-2 lodge. The lodge, naturally, remained operative. Moreover, Salvini eventually had to drop his resistance in the face of the combined efforts by secret service and judiciary leaders orchestrated by Gelli through his pressure groups. In a letter to the Grand Master, Gelli threatened to make public some of Salvini's unlawful financial operations, which could very well land him in prison.

Generally speaking, the Masons are steeped in embezzlement and corruption, the rationale being that the interests of the "fraternity" and the need to gain more influence in society make such practices necessary. Way back in the last century one of the "brethren" remarked: "Not all the thieves are Masons, of course, but all the Masons are thieves." Gelli, with his long history of law-breaking, was least of all suitable for the role of a moral judge. But his blackmail worked. And the Americans must have put some pressure on the Grand Master as well. Salvini retreated—and in rout.

On May 12, 1975, he issued a special decree restoring the P-2 lodge, granting it a special status which put it above the other lodges and making Gelli Venerable Master, i.e., the lawful head of the lodge.

P-2 thus had the green light to go ahead with its subversive operations. Gelli wasted no time to use his chance. The lesson had not been lost on him, however: he could no longer disregard the fact that the results of the efforts made by the lodge to pursue a "strategy of tension" were the opposite of those planned by Gelli at the bidding of the CIA; the reason for the failure was the maturity of the Italian working class movement and other left forces.

This became even more obvious when the Italian Communist Party polled more than 34 percent of the votes at the 1976 general election. Aldo Moro, who advocated a compromise with

the Communists, was steadily gaining support from broad sections of society, including the ruling Christian Democratic Party.

In this situation Gelli and his paymasters decided to look for a potent alternative to the threadbare strategy of "a permanent coup." The idea of making Italy a fascist state began gradually to cede to that of "a coup from within."

The combination of forces concentrated in the P-2 lodge suggested a plan of actually changing the character of state power without altering the existing facade. In that situation it was important to shield persons involved in the P-2 subversive activities from legal persecution. The lodge further secreted its activities as a result. Taking precautions, Gelli set up outside Italy, in Monaco, a reserve headquarters for the lodge, the Monte Carlo Committee. It was easier in that way to carry through arms trafficking deals, to plan speculative stock market operations and to engineer acts of terrorism.

Measures were being taken also to preserve the personnel. Lawyers hired by Gelli secured not-guilty verdicts for the fascist Freda and his friend Ventura, the perpetrators of bomb blasts in Milan, while the officials who had initiated the investigation into the P-2 affairs all but ended up in jail themselves: judge Gallucci of Rome charged the investigators with having drunk coffee at the public expense while going about their business. They barely escaped being arrested. Gelli set out to compromise honest court officials and to put an end to the investigation of the parliamentary commission led by Tina Anselmi, a Christian Democratic deputy and a veteran Resistance fighter. It was Anselmi's resolve and the support of the Socialist President Sandro Pertini that made it possible to kill the absurd charges and let the commission carry its work through to its conclusion.

Fierce resistance was put up to the investigators. The Italians say that "he who touches the wires dies." The "wires" in that case were the crimes perpetrated with the involvement of Masons. The investigators and other court officials, who were honestly discharging their duty and tracing the connection between Italy's rampant terrorism and its Masonic paymasters from among secret service officers, were removed from office or gunned down by hired assassins. Prosecuting attorney Vittorio Occorsio, who suspected a "Masonic trace" in a series of acts of terrorism in Italy, was killed. Elio Cioppa, a police

officer and a P-2 member, told the parliamentary commission that he had met Gelli in Occorsio's office two days before the latter's assassination. There were other victims, including the prosecuting attorneys Mario Amato and Luigi Palma.

The practice of assassinations arranged through Masonic channels will be described in more detail below. Now let us have a look at a plan for another "bloodless" coup, the "Democratic Renaissance Plan," drawn up by Gelli's lodge in late 1975-early 1976. The Italian parliamentary commission of inquiry drew the conclusion that the plotters had aimed to gain control of Italian society with a view to subverting democracy in the country.

The "Democratic Renaissance Plan," as it was conceived by Gelli, provided first and foremost for the establishment of a club of industrialists, financiers, representatives of the liberal professions, senior officials, legal officers and politicians. The club, the "Committee of Guarantors" (guarantors of what?), was to establish "firm links" with international Masonry.

So, a committee of moneybags was to run Italy. Politicians were to do its bidding and to subjugate the country to the forces among which Gelli singled out "international Masonry."

The planned committee of moneybags was nothing short of an exact replica of the Propaganda-2 lodge itself. The idea was to rule the country from "on-high," through technocrats, with politicians reduced to the role of their puppets. Public opinion, parliament and the Italian people themselves were totally disregarded. According to Gelli, power is to be exercised by the "chosen ones," while the working people and their parties and labor unions (if they are let to continue in existence) should keep quiet and not interfere with profit-making and with policies to the liking of "international Masonry."

Gelli's design was diktat toward his own people and subservience to "international Masonry." A more fitting name for that "Democratic Renaissance Plan" would be a "Plan for Authoritarian Strangulation."

The resolve of Gelli's inspirers to carry this plan through can hardly be questioned: the decisive factor in their view was the occult, uncontrollable influence of the persons gathered under the Masonic banner. The lodge had its people in the key posts, enjoyed the unlimited support of industrialists and bankers, and could make use of the secret services well-versed in organizing covert actions.

But the obstacles in the Masons' way were numerous, too, among them the working class movement and the incipient rapprochement between the Catholic workers and left parties. The idea of a "clerical-communist" alliance was especially hateful to the Big Bourgeoisie, the masters of the P-2 lodge.

Aldo Moro, Chairman of the Christian Democratic Party and a strong supporter of a "national concord" coalition, was marked down as the victim of another crime, which was to become an object lesson. Moro also advocated detente; it was he who signed for Italy the Helsinki Final Act, designed to introduce a new code of conduct into the practice of international relations, to have nations respect each other's security interests and to promote international understanding and cooperation.

The action against Moro was launched at a crucial moment. NATO was finalizing its "rearmament" plans, providing for the deployment of new American nuclear missiles in the territories of the US allies, including on Sicily. If a governmental coalition respecting the Communists' opinion was formed in Italy, the country could well withdraw its consent to missile deployment and block NATO's sinister plans. Moro did not have any government or state post at that time but enjoyed much prestige in the country. His views on international issues were common knowledge. In 1949 he had great reservations about the extent of Italy's involvement in NATO and later was wary of any move that could jeopardize the sovereignty and security of the country.

The US had no liking for the man. When Moro planned to visit the US in early 1978, the Americans were cold as ice. On January 12 of the same year the US Department of State issued a statement categorically objecting to any form of Communist participation in the governments of Italy and France. Moro feared for his life. "You will see, we will be made to pay dearly for our policy ... by our foes, domestic and foreign," he said shortly before his death to his friend, Senator Cervone of the Christian Democratic Party.

Moro's "domestic" foes could not forgive him his contribution to the drafting of Article 18 of the Italian Constitution, which forbade the establishment and activities of secret societies in Italy. Its provision foresaw, as it were, the character and lines of operation of Masonic lodges, the role secret Masonic societies played in the pursuit of the "strategy of tension," and their at-

titude to encroachments on the sovereignty of Italy and its people.

Moro was abducted on March 16, 1978, a fortnight after the US Ambassador to Rome, Richard Gardner, had called him "the most dangerous and ambiguous personality on the Italian political scene." That date was no chance: Moro was to present to parliament a plan of the Democratic Christians' cooperation with the main party of the working people, the Communists. That plan, his lifetime work, was vitally important to Italy and its future.

The details of the "Moro affair" are well known. The terrorists were directed by Mario Moretti, who had become the head of the Red Brigades after Feltrinelli had been killed (or died) and another ultra-left leader, Renato Curcio, had been arrested. Moretti instilled wanton ruthlessness in the operations of the Red Brigades: the number of assassinations jumped from three in 1977 to 16 the next year.

One of Moretti's friends was Corrado Simioni, leader of a "superclandestini" group. The members of that group grew rich from a series of expropriations (that is, robberies), and its leaders chose to settle in Paris, where a foreign-language school, Hyperion, with affiliates in almost all the West European capitals, was opened. Earlier Simioni had been expelled from the Italian Socialist Party for "immoral behavior" and turned to studies of "art problems" — in the Milanese office of the United States Information Agency (USIA), whose links with the CIA are an open secret. Then Simioni succumbed to power of religion and switched to theology. He "studied" it in Munich, the stronghold of the West German archrightists and the site of training camps for neo-Nazi activists. When he returned to Italy he was "ultra-left." He was suspected, and not without reason, of being an agent provocateur, while the newspaper *Lotta continua* of Rome reported that Simioni's name was on the list of the CIA agents in Italy.

And that man was a confidant of the Red Brigades leader Moretti, who had the telltale ability to slip through roundups in which his accomplices were snatched. Luis Gonzalez-Mata, a former CIA agent, hints in his book *Les vrais maîtres du monde* (The True Masters of the World) at Moretti's links with the police, while the *La Repubblica* correspondent Villoresi believed that Moretti had been infiltrated into the Red Brigades from

without and that the Hyperion school in Paris was the most important CIA front in Western Europe. That "school" is used to supply terrorists of every ilk with weapons and explosives and to control their operations.

Since the Italian secret services ordered to find the terrorists and release Moro were controlled by members of the P-2 lodge and since the "Master" himself was an adviser on the "Moro affair" to the SISMI head, General Santovito, and to the SISDE head, Giulio Grassini, one can imagine what a deadly trap had been set for the abducted Italian politician.

Moro undoubtedly suspected that the pseudo-Red Brigades and his "domestic and foreign" foes were coordinating their actions. The terrorists captured later said that when Moro had been interrogated by Moretti and his "team," he had asked: "Is it not the Americans who have told you to remove me?" In a letter from captivity dated April 10, 1978, when he had realized that his party colleagues, especially right wingers, did not want to do anything to have him released, he wrote the key words: "Perhaps this tough position toward me is the indication of American or West German influence." And is not there any relationship between Aldo Moro's words about American and West German influence and Simioni's "studies" of art at USIA and of theology in West Germany?

In addition, the "ultra-left" millionaire Renzo Rossellini, acting on information he had received in some arcane way, made an announcement about the planned crime over his personal Citta Futura radio station 45 minutes before the abduction. A couple of years later Rossellini joined the French "new philosophers" and clandestinely crossed into Afghanistan to plant illegal transmitters with instigatory recordings. Two abbreviations, the CIA and P-2, give us the link between the volte-faces of Simioni and Rossellini and explain the logic of Moretti, who, contrary to the opinion of other Red Brigades leaders, had Moro killed on May 9, 1978.

Those two organizations alone could let the criminals off the hook, although the police already knew the address of the Red Brigades headquarters in via Gradoli in Rome. Instead of arresting the leaders of the group at that address, the police mounted showy operations in the township of the same name in Viterbo Province, giving the terrorists the warning, as it were, that the word "Gradoli" spelled danger. It should be said for

truth's sake that one policeman did knock on the door behind which the abductors could be hiding but, "getting no answer," left and reported to his superiors that there had been no one at that address. Only after the terrorists had let a water tap running in the flat and the flat below got flooded did the secret service officers, acting on complaints from tenants, break down the door. They found the typewriter on which the criminals had typed their "communiques," false carplates and papers and other paraphernalia. The search was carried out with so much ado that, according to journalists, a woman terrorist who came to via Gradoli on a bike suspected something untoward, fled and must have warned her accomplices of the danger.

Moro's widow later said that the police had known in advance that a group of terrorists had arrived in Rome and that some unidentified persons had begun to follow her husband's car. He was refused an armor-plated car and was blackmailed even more persistently in the last weeks before the abduction. He was offered anew to drop out of politics and abandon his plan.

The police, too, had suspicions that Gelli was one of the inspirers and organizers of that crime. The police questor of Arezzo, where Gelli had made his residence, was instructed by Rome to investigate Gelli as a possible mastermind or co-organizer of the abduction. But any officials who tried to follow the instructions came against an impenetrable wall. General Grassini, head of the secret service of Italy's Ministry for the Interior and the boss of the Arezzo questor, himself was a member of the P-2 lodge. He not just blocked any action against his secret patron but, according to one of his subordinates, put Gelli in charge of all the operations to collect and process information relevant to the abduction! The P-2 member Cioppa, mentioned above, testified that the Ministry's reports on the "Moro affair" had been drafted at a conference with Gelli's participation. The head of the lodge had an official status at the conference because he had been infiltrated at a high level into a vital nerve center of the state.

Moro's death left a deep scar on Italian history. The objectives behind his abduction and assassination were actually achieved: the idea of national concord was buried together with its author and the Italian right reared their heads. American missiles were deployed in the country. Gelli's gang was as close to success as ever.

But the backlash of the heinous crime was that most of the Italians took a strong stand against rampant terrorism connived at by the secret services. The terrorists were in disarray. Some of them tried to dissociate themselves from such practices and even repented. Almost all those involved in the operation in via Fani, where Moro's bodyguards had been gunned down and he himself abducted, were arrested. The architects of the "strategy of tension" had to look for other means of provocation and to put together new groups and organizations for use in the future.

On top of that, the squabbling was growing between the financial centers of Masonry. Roberto Calvi, Director of Milan's Banco Ambrosiano, replaced Sindona, whom the Masons had failed to get out of the American jail, as the P-2 banker. Banco Ambrosiano, which had long-standing links with the Vatican, launched energetic operations on the domestic and foreign markets. It joined forces with another P-2 banker, Umberto Ortolani (who also was involved with the finances of the Vatican and the Maltese Order and was the co-owner, together with Gelli, of a chain of Latin American banks), to forge a sort of union of "Catholic" capital against the interests of "secular" capital, the traditional base of Italy's anticlerical Masons. The new grouping was crowding in the old ones. Arms sales to Latin America, oil trade and textile dumping were especially profitable, as was the "laundering" of the money extorted or stolen by the Mafia and other criminal organizations of the country. Speculation through fictitious societies doubled and trebled investment, and more money rolled in from the sales of false stock on the international market. In their drive for profit the P-2 bankers and Gelli himself challenged the established balance of forces in the Italian financial community.

The shared Masonic persuasions alone could not remove such contradictions: when it comes to money, even friends part ways. The Italian financial tycoons used their links to the international Lazard, Rothschild and other banks to trip Gelli's institutions time after time and to expose swindles which they alone, with their long experience of financial manipulations, could see through. It was with their help that Sindona was jailed; moreover he tipped his hand by "contracting" the assassination of investigator Vittorio Ambrosoli, who had been looking into the machinations of the Sicilian banker.

Next came Calvi's turn. The suspicious and reserved "banker with an icy stare," as he was described by Italian journalists, nevertheless trusted the Masons and believed that they would get him out of any trouble. A powerful force which he thought to be on his side was the Vatican's financial center, the Institute of Religious Operations, whose head, the US archbishop Marcinkus, used Calvi's banks for his own most sensitive operations. Gelli's business also counted: he used Calvi to ship weapons to Latin American dictators, first and foremost the Argentine military, while Marcinkus financed through his bank the subversive operations of Solidarity against the Polish government. All those activities were directed by the US Central Intelligence Agency, because Marcinkus, an American of Lithuanian extraction, kept in touch with his "company" on whose payroll he had been ever since it had been called the Office of Strategic Services.

Calvi was implicated also in operations which did not immediately pay off, such as the buying up of major Italian press bodies, the Rizzoli Publishers and the prestigious newspaper *Il Corriere Della Sera*. Gelli's personal weekly published in Milan, *Settimana-nale*, also demanded considerable investment. It was that weekly that in January 1980 obtained the first interview of Ronald Reagan as the new US President; he promised, inter alia, to crush the headquarters of international terrorism. Money had to be found, too, to feed millions into the machinery of the ruling parties. The deficit of Calvi's bank rapidly grew to exceed 1.5 billion dollars. The bank could not meet its current obligations, Calvi was put under home arrest, then released. It seemed at one point a compromise could be reached: his chief antagonist, Carlo De Benedetti, the Olivetti boss and, together with his brother, owner of a good number of Italian banks, agreed to become a board member of Calvi's bank. But as soon as he saw the bank's accounts, he walked out. The fate of the bank was sealed. Marcinkus refused to help. Calvi travelled to London on a false passport in the hope of getting a loan from British Masonic bankers. Driven to desperation by a series of deceptions and refusals, he threatened to expose the dealings of the "brethren," who had shamelessly fleeced his bank, and also the Vatican's operations.

The finale is common knowledge: hired assassins hang Calvi from London's Blackfriars Bridge. There are many indications

that the crime was perpetrated by the Mafia, whose services Gelli himself and his people used fairly often.

But Gelli's empire had begun to come apart at the seams even before that assassination, which was a landmark in the history of the P-2 lodge. The killings of investigators and machinations in the procurator's office could not fully block investigations of the crimes committed by the boss himself, and the discovery of the lists of the lodge's members merely put the final stop. The Master had to flee to America. He returned to Europe in disguise, with a moustache painted black, for a short while to try to withdraw his millions from Banque de Genève but was identified, detained and imprisoned in Switzerland. But when he was just about to be extradited to Italy, he escaped from jail with the Masons' help and made his way to Latin America (to be closer to the CIA). In September 1987 Gelli turned up in Geneva once again, clearly seeking to whitewash his reputation somewhat and regain access to the money deposited in Swiss banks. In February 1988 he was extradited to Italy to face a trial.

It is, perhaps, not so much important what will become of the former fascist and swindler, who had been placed by the CIA at the top of the invisible "pyramid" that had all but become the ruler of Italy. It is far more important to understand how the former mattress dealer, who made his money from supplies to the NATO bases in Italy, could play a role which was too much for him.

Undoubtedly, Gelli rose so high only because he was a tool of others. The Italian parliamentary commission, which for two years was painstakingly garnering information about the conspiracy of the P-2 lodge, drew the same conclusion. It noted that the functions performed by the P-2 lodge were "indubitably too broad for a personality such as Licio Gelli" and surmised that above the "pyramid" topped by the Master was another, principal "pyramid," which dictated the final objectives.

The commission was clearly evasive about the forces that operated in the upper structure because even general knowledge of them was not for the uninitiated. It only established the character of Gelli's relationship with secret services (meaning the CIA). That half-admission, however, will tell us more if we look beyond the boundaries of Italy.

There was above the "pyramid" of Italian Masonry the ruling "pyramid" of US Masonry, in which virtually the entire Ameri-

can political and financial oligarchy was represented. The authors of the parliamentary report noted that the entire postwar development of Italian Masonry had been directed and controlled by the Americans, specifically, by the above mentioned CIA operative Frank Gigliotti. It also pointed to the fact that Gelli appeared on the political scene just as Gigliotti had bowed out, and also that their functions had symptomatically coincided.

The disappearance of Gelli from Italy worried the top "pyramid." A representative delegation of American Masons from the International League for Human Rights arrived in Italy, as has been said above. They were received by an adviser to the Italian Prime Minister. The Americans addressed their indignant statement to the Italian League for the Protection of Human Rights—and were right on the mark because it was headed by Pasquale Bandiera, a member of the P-2 lodge.

But when it became clear that Gelli had been ultimately compromised and that there was no hope of rehabilitation, his "brethren" made a U-turn. All praise once lavished upon him was forgotten and Gelli and his lodge were branded as the "heretics" of Masonry. Moreover, it was claimed that Gelli had been doing the bidding of—the Soviet Union! A Soviet mole! That tale was launched in a rush a fortnight after the lists of the lodge members had been found in Gelli's office. Then papers prepared in April 1981 for General Santovito, the boss of the Defense Ministry Secret Service, spoke of an "Eastern conspiracy" with Gelli being its mastermind. As for the other P-2 Masons, they presumably knew nothing. The hypothesis portraying Gelli as an "Eastern agent" was found "very interesting." Things grew more and more fascinating. Next it was claimed that the lists found at Castiglion Fibocchi were "false," "deliberately" planted by Gelli to destabilize Italy, "to stab the state in the heart." The P-2 scandal itself, just like the attempt on the Pope's life on May 13, 1981, was merely a component of that same "destabilization scheme."

Santovito, himself a P-2 member, wanted to whitewash the lodge and himself and to sell to public opinion a version of events which Stephen Knight calls in his book *The Brotherhood* "Masonic disinformation." In that case, however, it also was CIA disinformation: it was only professional CIA misinformers, who already were busy cooking up the "Antonov case" at the time, that could link the fall of their favorite to the idea of

presenting the attempt on the Pope's life as ramifications of an "Eastern conspiracy."

It was a new Cagliostro, produced by the CIA to replace Gelli, who most likely put those words into Santovito's mouth. He was handed over all the "business" complete with control of the Italian secret services and the guidance of the Italian "brotherhood." He was Francesco Pazienza, which made the circle complete: CIA operative Gigliotti, CIA minion Gelli, CIA agent Pazienza. The chain was mended and the American "pyramid" was again firmly in place over Italy. Pazienza was right that it was a conspiracy — only the strings were pulled by the US "brethren" rather than by the East.

There is another strange circumstance. As long as General Grassini, a P-2 member, was in charge of SISDE, it did not respond to any request for information about Gelli. But when General De Francesco took over, relevant information immediately came to light. It turned out that Gelli had been involved in "large-scale" smuggling of South African gold, which was sold in Zurich, that he (hear, hear) had been recruited by Washington to help with the release of American hostages in Teheran, and that he had made "contributions" to presidential election campaigns in some of the Western countries both in Europe and in America. It was confirmed that Gelli had attended the inaugurations of Ford, Carter and Reagan at their personal invitations. As for Gelli's links with Eastern secret services, "no evidence has been found to confirm these suppositions." The new secret service boss had no reason to tell lies because he was not a member of Gelli's "team" and for the time being was out of the reach of the new American minion, Pazienza. But soon Pazienza "pocketed" the Deputy Interior Minister Francesco Mazzola: he doubled his wages and transferred him to SISMI. The man, along with the Italian secret services and the "brotherhood" as a whole, was to contribute to the concoction of the "Antonov case." Mazzola heaped one lie upon another as he described the "Bulgarian trail" to journalists...

Mino Pecorelli, a P-2 member and head of the lodge's press agency (who was given by Gelli a file on Italian politicians and labor leaders), once admitted that when industrialists and financiers, politicians, generals and judiciary officers pledged loyalty to Masonry, they automatically became agents of the US CIA. Moreover, he was so incautious and foolhardy as to promise

to tell something "new" about Gelli in connection with the "Moro affair." Pecorelli paid dearly: in early 1979 he was found in front of his house with a bullet put into his mouth.

Gelli once quipped in an interview that "the Masonic vendetta is a Middle Age tale." However, the series of mysterious deaths of those who could stand in the "brethren's" way, including members of the "brotherhood" themselves, is too long to dismiss them all as coincidences. But one thing is certain — Pecorelli was killed because he could reveal the carefully concealed truth.

AT THE SOURCES OF THE "UNDERGROUND RIVER"

Already a fugitive wanted by the Interpol, Venerable Master Licio Gelli secretly met with journalists to pose as a summarily slandered "father" and "guardian" of his charges and to present his lodge and himself as the fountain of good and virtue. Asked what he considered to be the principal values for the Mason, Gelli used to cite "moral purity" and "culture." Faced with another question, if he had much money, Gelli smiled slyly and put his finger to his lips: "Hush! The treasury has a very keen hearing." And, demonstrating his "moral purity" and "culture," explained: "Let us say that everyone has as much money and as many lice as he has."

Shortly afterward, Gelli, carrying a false Argentine passport, was seized by the Swiss police as he tried to draw millions of dollars from an account in a Geneva bank.

The morals and ethics of that man need no comment. Yet, there remain some nagging questions. It was, of course, habitual for Gelli to quote Masonic virtues and exploit the prestige and traditions of the movement. Moreover, his backers were as sure as himself of Gelli's ability to hold forth on the Masonic ideals, otherwise he would have hardly been invited to the inaugural White House ceremonies by three American presidents in succession. This recognition tells us a good deal, while the ready compatibility of criminal dealings and lofty ethic and moral principles makes us wonder about the roots of Masonry, its ideological foundations and the primordial forces that brought it into existence and advanced it, especially in view of the fact that along with outstanding men of culture and science, whose dedication and noble principles are beyond question, Licio Gelli and his likes enjoy "the right of citizenship" and, moreover, are put into positions of leadership.

Perhaps, we should turn to the sources of Masonry to try and understand how the concepts of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" and advocacy of human rights can be reconciled with regular violations of all those concepts, the inexorable drive for profit (including by utterly criminal means), intolerance of ideological foes, and militarism.

As you read about ever new scandals involving Masons and about conspiracies, assassinations and acts of provocation engineered by Gelli's people and their American paymasters, you are apt to exclaim: "You don't say! Are they really Masons? Or is it a caricature of what we know from high literature and history? Isn't something amiss here? They are either imposters who arrogated to themselves the ancient banners or we just have a very poor idea of the history and origins of Masonry if the upshot of it all is so amazingly sad."

Yet, in our journey to the sources of that phenomenon we risk to stumble more than once over the rocks of uncertainty. Very little authentic information is available. Just an approximate date of the emergence of today's Masonry from "nowhere" can be given. There is evidence of the establishment of Masonic lodges in the early 17th century, although in Britain, for instance, they had not been ultimately legalized until the early 18th century. It is logical to presume that its structures were linked to the cultural, scientific and religious ferment of the 16th century, the age of Reformation, "heresies," burgher libertarianism and peasant riots. But even here these links are speculative and barely traceable in the resemblance of some doctrines and in similar organizational patterns of "brotherhoods" and "guilds."

It was understandable that the humanitarian and political movement that was out to assert itself and to break through the walls of feudalism wanted to build up an aura of remote antiquity and the appeal of possession of arcane secrets which had been forgotten by all the others. It had to rely on both knowledge and prejudice typical of that age in order to gain position and influence.

But the farther back into history we go, the smaller our chance of finding evidence of the existence of a secret society of "Freemasons" as a continuous phenomenon. The Scottish Rite Masons claim that the Templars, Johannites and other orders of Crusader knights, who went out to conquer the Holy Land, were

the forerunners of today's Masonry and that the link is unbreakable. Let us not reject this hypothesis out of hand but take another look at it later on.

As we go farther back in time, we see realities giving way to legends and myths in which it is all but impossible to tell fact from fiction, truth from fantasy.

As the authentic world gets lost in the mist of vagueness, the Masons grow more and more sweeping in their claims to present themselves as the strongest and most fruitful movement of antiquity: all the Biblical characters, from Adam, the "first Mason" who possessed "divine knowledge," to Noah, Nimrod and Solomon, are revered as the ancient "Masters;" Judaic heroes are followed by Egyptian and Greek ones; then come Oriental sages, from Babylon and Persia to India and China.

Masonry seeks to present itself as a universal doctrine which has absorbed all the "wisdom" of the world and all its beliefs. Ancient sects, which accepted the "initiates" capable of understanding concepts of the structure of the world and its divine hierarchy, were portrayed as steps leading to Masonry. Knowledge of the ultimate truths was made conditional on the special development of the personality through the learning of the mysteries of "initiation" and through arcane rites. (Many of those mysteries and rites, both ancient Egyptian and cabalistic Judaic ones, are still in existence in the secret rituals of today's lodges.) The impossibility of initiating "crude" souls, rough "stones" — which most people are — into the mystery was explained away by the fact that the truth was open only to the ultimate intellects and "purified souls," in which the glow of "divine presence" lost long ago was still alight. As for the rest, the uncultured and riotous men spoiled by animal instincts and avarice and incapable of controlling themselves, their lot was to remain "before the temple" (Lat. — *pro fane*). But even those who are admitted to the "temple" are led to the truth gradually, step by step. Very few of them are honored with admittance to the synedrion of the highest rank, which communicates directly with the supreme being and therefore is considered the highest authority for the uninitiated mass of humanity.

The principle of "initiation" through rites resembles religious ceremonies, the difference being that religious doctrines can be learned by the general public from the Bible, the Koran,

etc., while the Masonic and other esoteric doctrines are open to just a few. They are kept secret from the uninitiated.

Those who write about the Masons are not unanimous as regards specific names, real and mystic characters, and the names of secret societies and sects to which Free Masonry traces its origins. Guido Francocci, an Italian Masonic authority, published in 1950 the book *Masonry: Its Historical and Idealistic Values*.¹ It was approved by Ugo Lenzi, the Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Italy, and therefore can be considered appropriate from the point of view of the Masonic canons. The book lists in the pantheon of "luminaries," ancient teachers, Rama and Zarathustra, Krishna and Buddha, Hermes, the God of commerce, invention, cunning and theft, Orpheus and Pythagoras, Plato and Lao-tzu, Confucius and Moses, Jesus and Mohammed. In other words, the author leads the reader to believe that prophets from almost all the religions and faiths paved the way for the Masonic "advent."

Francocci lists the myths which the Masons consider basic to their doctrine. Characters which developed their abilities to the point of supranatural dominate most of them. One such personality was master craftsman Daedalus. He built on Crete the famous Labyrinth as a prison for the savage Minotaur. He also made wings of wax and feathers for his son Icarus. The memory of the inventor on Crete is controversial because he indulged corrupt rulers and because the venture with the Minotaur can hardly be considered a good deed either. Francocci, however, justifies him as follows: "Daedalus represents scientific technology, cold and indifferent to good and evil. It is an end in itself and does not impart to human labor any educational, moral or ethical content."²

Next comes Heracles. But the author sees nothing moral or ethical about his feats, either, stressing predominantly "the strength and physical health" of the demigod.

He recounts the myth of the Argonauts, who symbolize enterprise and willpower in pursuit of their goal, the Golden Fleece. Francocci also mentions Orpheus, seeking his Eurydice, Theseus with Ariadne and her magic thread, Alpheus, who, pursuing his beloved Arethusa, became an underground river in Arcadia,

¹ Guido Francocci, *La Massoneria nei suoi valori storici e ideali*, Edizioni Giovanni Bolla, Milan, 1950.

² Ibid., p. 37.

and many others. The latter myth, incidentally, is especially dear to the Masons: the "underground river" became one of the symbols of the movement, standing for its secrecy and purposefulness.

What strikes the eye is the absence of the myth of Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven. Could it be a chance omission? Prometheus, chained to a cliff, seems a better symbol of the love of people than Heracles with his club, representations of whom adorn Masonic rites!

What can be termed a "technocratic" approach is offered also by the basic myth which stipulates the special place of the Freemasons, that of building the Temple of Solomon. A mysterious architect from Tyre, named in Masonic texts variously as Adoniram, Hiram or Hiram Abiff, was building a temple of Jahveh for King Solomon in Jerusalem. The temple was needed to assert King Solomon's spiritual and secular rule in the "promised land." Adoniram directed with an iron hand the 130,000-strong army of builders divided into "guilds" according to their trades. Handpicked masters headed every guild. They received better pay and knew the "secret word" told them by the architect. Apprentices and fellow crafts had to be content with smaller pay. As Solomon showed the Queen of Sheba (Balkis-Balkite) round the building site, he himself was impressed by the efficiency and unquestionable discipline of the stonemasons, who looked up to Adoniram as to their spiritual leader as well as the supervisor of the project.

The pattern of privileges, however, led three malcontents to plot a conspiracy. Those three fellow crafts — the Syrian Fanor, the Phoenician Amru and the Jew Mafusail — started by spoiling a metal bath smelt by Adoniram, which made him seek help from a supranatural force; it transpired then that he had in the entrails of the Earth an ancestor, the procreator of the race of supergifted people. Adoniram, helped by his ancestor, quickly coped with the difficulties. But the plotters killed him all the same, because he refused to promote them to the master's rank, which would have given them knowledge of mysteries and higher pay.

After the death of the architect, Solomon embraced his organizational principles to establish a universal society of the builders of the symbolic Temple of Solomon. In appointing the headmaster to lead the new order, the King presumably said: "I

today inaugurate a corporation of the chosen ones which, remaining in the service of God and the King, will always be a tool of order and of the execution of justice.”³

The myth extols the organization of the “chosen ones” as an end in itself. It is the organization that embodies aspirations to the highest spiritual and secular power. Emphasis is laid on the selection and training of people chosen on the strength of their intellect, character, occupational and professional capabilities, position, influence and wealth, those who can subordinate and lead other people.

Way back ago priests garnered and cherished knowledge of immense practical importance. Astronomic observations helped predict solar and lunar eclipses and foresee good or bad harvests (in particular, prompt the rulers when to build up larger food stocks). Knowledge of geometry and the laws of architecture and building made it possible to erect religious structures, pyramids and palaces which even today strike one with their magnificence. The actual knowledge of the Universe and the Earth, however, was shrouded in a veil of mystery. The “initiated” shared their greatest discoveries only with a handful of the “chosen ones.” The monopoly of knowledge brought influence and wealth. For instance, the community set up by Pythagoras in Croton in South Italy in the 6th century B.C. relied on the methods of the Egyptian priests, who had mixed serious scientific studies with every sort of mystification.⁴

Pythagoras had strict rules of admission to his community, which became an elite, closed grouping. The legend has it that one Diagoras, when “initiated” into the community, asked a Pythagorean priest about the meaning of the mysteries involved in the initiation ceremonies and got the following answer: “We seek knowledge of the mysteries of Nature. We have learning of two kinds, one for the ignorant mob, the other for the

³ G. Francocci, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

⁴ Pythagoras’ legacy has become part and parcel of the Masons’ historical heritage, in particular, because Pythagoras, a native of the Samos Island, who fled from Polycrates’ tyranny to Italy, was a geometer. Meanwhile, the Masons’ supreme being, the Great Architect of the Universe, was considered a geometer who had created everything around him with a magic turn of his pair of compasses. Hence the pair of compasses, to which everything around is “subordinate,” is the highest symbol of Masonry. It usually carries the letter “G,” one of the meanings of which is “geometry,” but which also has other, secret meanings, including strength, power, glory and wealth. The eye of the pair of compasses also is a symbol: it is the eye of Jahveh, and also the Sun.

initiated sages. One is myths invented by people and imputed to gods; it is enough for the mob. The other incorporates cosmogony, astronomy and geometry, which give us understanding of those phenomena of Nature which the mob considers supranatural. Keeping that learning secret, we rise above the mob." Diagoras said he doubted one could consider oneself a friend of the people if one withheld useful knowledge from them. "The human mind is more susceptible to the effect of something unusual," the answer was. "Miracles are needed to control the mob. If it believes in gods, it will believe the priests, their servitors."⁵

Possession of mystery gave one position, influence and wealth. The mass of people believed that those who knew mystery communicated directly with heavens, with the gods. They seemed to be men apart.

That was how a monopoly of knowledge bred veneration and fed religion. Ways in which privileged strata of priests, shamans and sorcerers took shape can be traced in societies of various types and among peoples and tribes standing at different development levels.

The ciphering and coding of knowledge and its communication in mystic forms, as heavenly revelations, have been practised by secret societies since times immemorial as a means of attaining power and wealth. The scholarly, creative aspect of the practice cannot be denied either, but it was not a search for truth for the sake of pure knowledge to be selflessly propagated. One used his mental powers and other abilities to advance, to rise up the hierarchic ladder and to grow rich, and the use of scientific knowledge in mystic forms was a means toward those ends.

Though fearing the rise of priests and clergymen, the powers that be nevertheless needed them. Power was not solid enough if it relied on strength alone but was not complemented by material dependence or by control of the people's souls. That was how the symbiosis of political, military and spiritual power took shape over the centuries. Secret spiritual societies were prominent here because they could strike imagination with

⁵ The Pythagoreans' arrogance and open contempt for the ordinary people and their needs eventually caused public outrage. A rebellion flared up, and the "mob" toppled the dictatorship, although it was headed by refined scholars and scientists.

knowledge of mysteries and rites, and with pompous and lavish ceremonies.

There is hardly any need to recall all the sects and societies which rose and fell at crucial points of history: the list would have taken hundreds of pages. But the fact that Masonry is so prominent among them today only means that at various stages of human history its existence has met some long-term needs and been useful for various reasons.

Let us first have a look at the outward trappings and rites of Masonry in our attempt to understand those needs and reasons. The decor of Masonic halls is clearly eclectic: there are the Judaic seven-horned chandelier and the Bible next to Greek columns and Egyptian cosmogonic representations, Masonic tools next to heraldic symbols of knighthood. All that resembles a theater basement, where scenery from several very different productions has been dumped helter-skelter. Symbols of the pharaonic Egypt or the remarkable harmony of Greek antiquity doubtlessly produce a far greater impression when seen separately.

Yet the "brethren" have retained those eclectic attributes over the centuries and firmly believe that they do work. There is another explanation, namely, that the Masons would like to attract people from various faiths and of different tastes. To relate to Christ, new converts in Africa show him black in their representations, so Masonic symbols offer virtually everyone something that would be dear to him individually. This universality certainly has a purpose. The Masonic attributes are pronouncedly conventional, abstract and symbolic, so that they may seem simplistic and even naive.

But the main thing most probably is that blend of images and ideologies which could bring together such antagonistic forces as those that united in the P-2 lodge. This means that the symbols of the "brotherhood" are open to more than one interpretation, that they are ambiguous, two-faced, like Janus, like the white-and-black bride in Masonic rites, like the floor of black-and-white squares in their ritual premises, like the mandatory black of ermine tails against the white fur of their mantles.

In that world of conventionality every neophyte, as he contemplates the road of improvement and ascent up the seven steps of the Temple of Solomon before him, can view the ladder of Masonry from two opposite angles: one is noble, prompted

by concern for humanity and free from temporal bonds, while the other is earthly, determined by the desire to acquire connections in lodges so as to advance one's own business or career. Some are aglow with the sentiments of "fraternity," others view their "brethren" as accomplices, while still others manage to reconcile the two attitudes. Such an arrangement opens the way to both "black" and "white," liberals and conservatives, egoists and altruists.

It is at some later point that the falling apart takes place. There is a need for noble ones—to "ennoble" the cause—and for pragmatics—to advance Masons and "to carry on the light."

Such a blend of the high and the low may seem arbitrary—but it is the secret of viability. Throughout history Masonry has attracted quite a few noble, dedicated, gifted souls, and even men of genius. There was a special need for them at the time of antifeudal revolutions, wars of independence, the breakdown of old structures, the recruitment of new followers. The checkerboard ambiguity and multiformity of Masonry had another meaning to its future: it augured, as it were, the bright and shady aspects of Masonic activity. The latter were effectively rationalized: the "lowly" deeds of the "brethren" and the means used by them to achieve their goals were supposedly prompted by lofty considerations. J.S.M. Ward, an ideologist of Masonry, stresses the paramount importance of "duality," "dichotomy" of Masonic symbols in his book *An Explanation of the Royal Arch Degree*: "Masonry has more than one inner meaning; at times there are several meanings one within the other..."⁶

Once, digging through piles of second-hand books at the Seine embankment in Paris, I came across a few volumes in red and blue bindings, books for the "initiated." The war storms had worked havoc in the book world, too, and what must have been kept away from the profanes had ended up in a foreign land and within the reach of a non-Mason. I bought a few books out of curiosity, remembering the kind and even somewhat funny Mason Pierre Bezukhov, portrayed by Leo Tolstoy in his *War and Peace*. Now, years later, I am perusing those volumes to

⁶ J.S.M. Ward, *An Explanation of the Royal Arch Degree*, The Baskerville Press, Ltd., London, 1925, p. 2.

trace the chain of Masonic doctrines with all its links. Professor Ward's observation that there may be several meanings one within the other (like the Russian matryoshka) is important to understanding the methodology of Masonic symbols. Ward warned in his treatise that every meaning prepares the ground for the next one as the "searcher" advances in the science of Masonry. No meaning is supposed to contradict any other.

I decided to test that assertion on the touchstone of the issue which can hardly be called secondary in the Masonic doctrine, namely, on the problem of similarities and differences between the religious concepts of Masonry and those of other spiritual systems. What is the essence, the core of the Masonic beliefs? What is the Masons' idea of their supreme being, the Great Architect of the Universe? What is the relationship between that being and Christianity, the most widely practised European religion, or other faiths?

What had Ward to say on this score in his book, written for Masons themselves? Interpreting the dogma of the triunity of God, Ward considers at the same level the Trinity of Christianity – Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, the Kabbalistic Trinity of Jehovah, Shekinah and Messiah, and the Hinduistic Trinity of Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu. This interpretation alone clashes with the principle of harmony because the Hindu gods have different functions: Brahma is the Creator, Vishnu is the Protector, Shiva is the Destroyer.⁷

The system of views of Christianity is known to relate antagonistically to that of Judaism. Hence the conclusion that the arguments of Ward and other Masonic authorities that the symbols of Masonry and their interpretations at every stage of "improvement" stem harmoniously from one another, just cannot be true.

It can be presumed that at the lower stages of initiation Masons (usually honest Christians or believers of other denominations) are deliberately introduced to a lightened meaning of the Masonic symbols, especially its chief symbol, that of the Great Architect of the Universe. Ward, for instance, tries to relate the Masonic symbols to those of Christianity, matching the 12 signs of the Zodiac, which ring the Masonic ritual hall, to the 12 apostles, etc.

⁷ J. S. M. Ward, op, cit., pp. 65, 75-76.

But there appear dark symbols in the glow of lightened knowledge as Ward produces new interpretations for the subsequent stages of initiation. A disciple, for instance, has to descend "into Hell or the Underworld, the Castle of Despair" so that he should feel that "he is forsaken even by God." Then he is told that "the light of the Master of Masters is merely visible darkness."

As one proceeds from stage to stage of Masonry, the Christian interpretation of the world increasingly gives way to atavistic beliefs typical of the ancient sets of Gnostics and Manichaeans, and later Cathars (Albigensians), who regarded the Creator and the Destroyer, Light and Darkness at the same level, or freely interchanged them.⁸

The Cathars (Albigensians), whose movement gained ground in south-east France and the Pyrenees in the 11th-14th centuries, shared the Manichaean views of the dualism of man and rejected reverence for the cross and papal authority. In 1209 Pope Innocent II launched a crusade against the Albigensians. Their last stronghold, the Montségur Castle, fell in 1244. Many of the Albigensians' views and organizational principles are retained in Masonry. The mysterious figure of the Great Architect is shrouded in impenetrable darkness.

Leo Tolstoy described in his *War and Peace* that in Western Europe Pierre Bezukhov was "revealed" the names of Adonai, the creator of the world, and the ruler Elohim, but was not told the third name, "the ineffable, which has the meaning of all."

Senior Masons merely give a glimpse of the nature of the Great Architect to their followers. They do so by reinterpreting Biblical texts in a new, unusual light. They read the Bible "contrariwise," as it were. The legend of Adoniram (Hiram), the builder of the Temple of Solomon, hints at the being which induced Eve to taste fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. That being is the force which can give man power and glory. It was thanks to it that Cain taught people trades and built the world's first city of Baalbek, whereas Abel merely grazed

⁸ Manichaeism is a religious philosophy which originated in Persia in the 3rd century A.D. Its founder, Mani, was enslaved and then bought out by a rich widow. Having returned home, he preached the equivalence of good and evil. Their eternal struggle is to end in a catastrophe which will destroy matter, while the spirit will be set free. Man is dualistic: his soul is born of light and his body of darkness. He should try to assist toward the victory of light over darkness. Mani was executed in 277. His followers called themselves "Sons of the Widow" and the Masons borrowed that name.

sheep. The idea is that another omnipotent being, jealous of Cain and resentful of his independence, provoked in Abel hostility toward his brother. Defending himself, Cain committed fratricide. There came fresh acts of punishment of Cain and his progeny which, interpreted "contrariwise," seem unfair. Even the deluge sent from the heavens did not destroy Cain's lineage and a few generations later there was born Hiram, the Great Architect of the Temple of Jahveh, whose abilities were explained by his ancestry and by the support of the being opposed to God, the "illuminated" and "light-carrying" being—Lucifer, or Satan.

It is a legend, of course, but it seems to be related in some arcane way to a number of historical events.

The Knights Templars with Grand Master Jacques De Molay at their head were charged with the heretical worship of Baphomet, a monster with horns and a female-male body. Some of the Masonic publications argue that it was a false charge, cooked up by the French King Philip the Fair, who wanted to lay his hands on the Templars' countless wealth and destroyed them out of avarice. The trial of the Templars lasted from 1307 to 1314. Torture was used to wrench evidence from De Molay's followers, and historians have yet to adopt a unanimous attitude to this trial. Incidentally, De Molay's name is honored by the Masons and figures in the names of many prestigious lodges.

Let us turn back to the name which "has the meaning of all." Since it is "ineffable," it remains unknown, which allows for different interpretations. Then there is the doctrine of the "chosen ones:" those who descend from the "illuminated" ones and possess "radiant qualities" must recognize one another and unite to form a worldwide brotherhood of "builders of the Temple." They are capable of leading mankind because they alone can produce great builders, military leaders, thinkers, financiers, engineers and, following the same logic, industrialists and businessmen.

Should we rule out the demonic origin of their gifts? The problem of "demonism" is discussed in many literary works, including those by major men of letters who were members of the "brotherhood." For example, Goethe, who joined the Amalia lodge in Weimar in 1780, was an ideologist rather than a rank-and-file Mason. Drawing inspiration from works by one of the forerunners of Masonry, the German theologian Johann Valen-

tin Andrea, who expounded the ideas of the "Brotherhood of the Rose-Croix," Goethe, well-advanced in years, wrote his *Faust*. As we consider that work in the context of our study, we should remember that Goethe cherished his reputation of a well-intentioned citizen and, naturally, could ill afford presenting in *Faust* his denial of the Christian dogmata. He was known as a Greek, "Antinoüs," an enthusiast of Antiquity but not a heretic. Still, we find in *Faust* the denial of Christian values in many truths and revelations which Goethe wanted to convey to the "initiated."⁹

The train of trials which fell to the lot of the "searching Doctor Faust" was plotted by Mephistopheles. The "spirit of denial" has the special sympathies of God, who entrusts Faust to him with the instruction:

*So long as he on earth doth live,
So long 'tis not forbidden thee.
Man still must err, while he doth strive...
Enough! 'tis granted thee! Divert
This mortal spirit from his primal source;
Him, canst thou seize, thy power exert
And lead him on thy downward course,
Then stand abash'd, when thou perforce must own,
A good man, in the direful grasp of ill,
His consciousness of right retaineth still.*

Given God's attitude to Faust, Mephistopheles looks more caring and human, if we can say so about the Devil. He patiently fulfils all the whims, wishes and idées fixes of the scholar, though not disinterestedly but waiting for the words: "Then to the moment might I say: Linger awhile, so fair thou art!" so as to take possession of Faust's soul.

Mephistopheles, characteristically, does not think himself to be evil. In the end he does not prevent Faust to go into Paradise, justifying, as it were, the words: "Part of that power which still

⁹ Goethe conveyed his basic attitude in his poems, which were not intended for publication and were put out many years after his death. For instance, he remarked in his Venetian epigrams, which were written in 1790 but had not been published in full before 1914: "I find just four things more abominable than the poisonous snake: tobacco smoke, bedbugs, the smell of garlic and +. (Wenige sind mir jedochwie Gift und Schlange zuwider, Viere, Rauch des Tobaks, Wanzen und Knoblauch und +.) The cross was detested by him so much that he wouldn't even name it, inserting its symbol instead.

produceth good, while ever scheming ill." Or take another philosophical idea expounded in the book:

*Part of the part am I, which at the first was all.
A part of darkness, which gave birth to light.
Proud light, who now his mother would enthrall,
Contesting space and ancient rank with night.*

Now let us draw a parallel between the "ineffable name" which "has the meaning of all" and Goethe's "part of the part ... which at the first was all ... which gave birth to light;" we are close to finding the "ineffable name" which Masons of the higher ranks were afraid of revealing to naive Pierre Bezukhov.

The question of establishing the "ineffable name" which belongs, it can be safely presumed, to the Great Architect of the Universe himself, is not purely theoretical or philological but relates to the basic convictions of the "builders of the Temple of Solomon:" who do they worship and what are their beliefs? Very few of the Masons know the ciphered version of that name.

Stephen Knight attempted in his book *The Brotherhood* to trace the origins of that name. In the chapter entitled "The Devil in Disguise" he starts with the question if Masonry is compatible with Christianity. While the Reverend Saul Amias, a London rabbi and a British Mason, told Knight that "there is nothing incompatible with my religion as a Jew, as an orthodox Jew, in Freemasonry, nothing at all,"¹⁰ what about Christianity? Thousands of Christians join the Masons in the belief that their supreme being is an exact replica of the Christian God.

Knight mentions the book *Darkness Visible* by Walton Hannah, published in Britain in 1952. It argued that the religious beliefs of the Mason and those of the Christian were incompatible, which drew a strong reaction from the Mason dignitaries of the Anglican Church. *Light Invisible, a Freemason's Answer to Darkness Visible*, was penned by an Anglican vicar under the alias Vindex. Taking issue with Hannah, he nevertheless confirmed differences between, if not the incompatibility of, the Masonic and Christian beliefs. Anyway, the author of *Light Invisible* did not deny that the system of Masonic views was rooted in religion. "It is the oldest of all religious systems, dat-

¹⁰St. Knight, op. cit., pp. 231-232.

ing from time immemorial," he wrote. "It is not in itself a separate religion, and has never claimed to be one, but it embodies in itself the fundamental truths and ancient mysteries on which every religion is based... We worship and believe as a first principle in the fullness of the Godhead of which other religions see only in part."¹¹

A religious system rather than religion, the difference being that between the general and the specific. Yet the specific, the partial is incomplete, and this is precisely what any religion looks like in the light of the Masons' claims to a total belief "in the fullness of the Godhead." That claim should not be dismissed easily because it can have very different consequences depending on the idea of the supreme super-God.

According to Knight, two-thirds of the Masons cannot answer the question about the true nature of their God, the Great Architect. Just one-fifth of the Masons, those promoted to "Masters," are admitted into the privileged tier of the Royal Arch Degree. Unlike the more broad-based lodges, which unite people at the lower rungs of the social ladder in terms of position, rank and occupation, those who reach the Royal Arch Degree constitute the elite of Freemasonry. While the first three degrees, the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft and the Master Mason, are subordinated (in Britain) to the Grand Lodge, the upper tiers of Freemasonry do not take their orders from the Lodge but are administered by the Supreme Council, the chief headquarters of the British Masonic movement. Masons reaching the upper tiers are entitled to a broader view of the nature and prospects of the movement.

Upon initiation into the Royal Arch Degree, the candidate is given an idea of the "ineffable name." He is not told everything, naturally, although now he has entered that part of the Masonic house which rises from the fourth to the 18th storey, i.e., from the "Secret Master" degree to the degree of "Knight of the Pelican and Eagle and Sovereign Prince Rose Croix of Heredom." Higher up rise the 19th to 30th degrees, from the "Grand Pontiff" and the "Venerable Grand Master" to the "Grand Elected Knight Kadosh, Knight of the Black and White Eagle" who have their own, even more black-and-white mysteries, to speak nothing of the 31st, 32nd and 33rd degrees (the

¹¹ Ibid., p. 233.

“Grand Inspector Inquisitor Commander,” the “Sublime Prince of the Royal Secret” and the “Grand Inspector General,” respectively). Each of these degrees involves even more impenetrable ritual and other secrets.¹²

Knight penetrated only the fourth to 18th degrees of the Royal Arch—but still learned a good deal. Indeed, he learned the “ineffable name.”

The name of the Great Architect turned out to be synthetic, a composite of the names of three gods. Knight gives it as JAHBULON.

The names of three gods, the Judaic Jahveh (Yahweh), the Canaanite Baal (Bul) and the Egyptian Osiris, are ciphered in it. Jahveh is better known to us because of the spread of Judaism. He is honored in a Hebrew inscription present in many Masonic rites and his all-seeing eye is shown in a triangle. The other two names are less known because the faiths that worshipped them have not survived to our day. Osiris with his spouse Isis and son Ghor are mentioned more often. He is the god of the underworld, but what about Baal? He is perhaps known only to those who read mediaeval treatises about witches and other dark forces. The 16th-century demonologist John Weir identified Baal as a devil, worshipped as the most powerful force. It had the body of a spider and three heads—those of a man, a toad and a cat—his voice was raucous and he taught his followers guile, cunning and the ability to become invisible.

When Knight, pursuing his research, asked Royal Arch Masons to explain the meaning of JAHBULON or just pronounced that name, his interlocutors invariably grew confused. Some of them knew how to decipher the first syllable but no one could do more. Could Knight himself have made a mistake? Perhaps, some of the Masons fobbed him off with what he himself called “organized disinformation?” Perhaps, the “satanic” component of the sacred triad is a lie and slander of Masonry? It seems absurd to believe, indeed, that one of the names of God was the name of the Devil.

Let us not jump to conclusions but turn to the above mentioned book by Professor Ward, an unquestionable authority on Freemasonry and a student of Indian and Kabbalistic systems, of the secret Chinese society Hung, who also was Fellow of the

¹²St. Knight, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

Royal Anthropological Institute. His book *An Explanation of the Royal Arch Degree*, published in London in 1925, offers some clarifications of the matter.

Ward begins by warning about the mystical meaning of the Arch degrees because it is only in a mystical way that the most exalted ideas of God can be perceived. The true objective of the degree presumably is to discover God's name within man, and "the object of all true mystics is to achieve a vision—an experience of the nature of God—within their own hearts." Ward calls that condition the "beatific vision."¹³

But the closer to the "beatific vision," the more often Ward cautions that the Royal Arch degrees today have been "given a peculiarly Jewish aspect"¹⁴ and that in the end the initiate is introduced in the synedrion, a sort of Senate of the ancient Jews, which had the mystical number of 72 members.

Ward becomes especially cautious when he goes on to the discussion of "words" in a veiled manner, understandable only to the "initiates." For instance, he mentions the "names" comprising the "composite word," which is the "lost name" of God. He does not spell them out not to disclose the Masonic secret but what he says is enough to decide if Knight was correct in his guesses. "It is not necessary to write much concerning the first w., which indeed by no stretch of the imagination can be regarded as a Masonic secret," Ward says. He explains the unwillingness of those who have discovered it to spell it out by the Jews' prejudice that he who utters the name of God correctly acquires power over the visible and the invisible world. Hence variations of the name of the Jewish God, Jehovah, who has been called, inter alia, Jahveh. Actually, Ward gives us the first composite part of the "lost name."

"With regard to the other w. a certain amount of discretion is essential," says Ward at the start of the more sensitive portion of his clarifications. "The Babylonian conception of God was by no means the same as that held by the Jews, and indeed the Hebrew prophets never tired of denouncing vigorously any among their flock who dared worship Him under the Babylonian name."¹⁵

¹³J.S.M. Ward, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 86.

So the second "word," the name of the ancient Babylonian and Canaanite God, is associated by the Jews with blasphemy, and Ward says: "The joining of this word to the Hebrew w. would have roused the furious indignation (of the followers of Judaism. — *L.Z.*) for they would have considered it idolatrous and almost blasphemous." The clarification does not give us the name but leaves little doubt about the authenticity of Knight's conclusion. It is Baal, modified into Bul.

Now for the third component of the "composite name." It, too, would have found little sympathy with the followers of Judaism and for the same reason as in the case of the Babylonian component. That Egyptian word, according to Ward, is "of great historical importance to us." Osiris? Yes, most likely. But why is he denoted by such a strange abbreviation, "On"? Ward explains this by the end of his book. He says: "It is sufficient to say that the whole purpose of the degree is to teach us about the nature of God. It is an allegory and a dramatic representation of the great initiation of the true mystic and represents the beatific vision.

"It is indeed, the at-one-ment."

Why does Ward stress and break into syllables that last word? He explains that the "Egyptian word was used for Osiris when Isis lamented his death."¹⁶

Hence "On" is a part of Osiris's name.

Now all the pieces have fallen into their places. Jahveh (Jah), Baal (Bul), and Osiris ("one" or "on") join into JAHBULON, the "composite name" of the Great Architect of the Universe, the total Masonic God. The Jewish-Babylonian-Egyptian God is the Masons' universal and supreme ruler.

Now it is clearer why Hannah so strongly denied the compatibility of that deity and the Christian God.

The point is not the combination of names, of course, but the ideological message carried by each of them. What is the function of Jahveh with his all-seeing eye? Does he watch only "his own people" or the world as a whole? What is the role of the Babylonian idol Baal, elevated to the stature of a superior being, who inspired Cain to build Baalbek, at the site on which the ruins of temples devoted to three faiths at once are still standing? Is he not the binding element of the group? And what

¹⁶J. S. M. Ward, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

is left to Osiris, God of the Underworld? Which is the Creator, which the Destroyer and which the Messiah, if we follow the logic of Ward's interpretation of the Trinity?

Ward suggests that this should be learned "through the heart," through inspiration, through the "beatific vision." But the Trinity of this kind is hard to understand as an entity, and it looks anything but "beatific." It might be a blend of the male and the female principle plus the Devil represented by Baphomet, the worship of whom was the undoing of the Templars. Or is it a reflection of Mephistopheles's musings that darkness gave birth to light and was unfairly rejected by it?

The Royal Arch members are explained at this stage that the light of the "Master of Masters" is just "visible darkness." What are they told at the higher degrees of initiation? Who and what are held up as the objects of their service and is there any line drawn between good and evil, love and hatred, light and darkness?

So the first, idyllic idea of Masonry as a means of attaining the kingdom of love and truth is gradually giving way to a more contrasting and undoubtedly darker picture. Those who initially fell for the Masons' striving for self-improvement, the understanding of truth and the development of personality (what they call "working wild stone") found themselves far removed from the starting point as they advanced from degree to degree. What would be the impact on the neophytes if they proceeded immediately from the blue and golden decor of the lodges of the first three degrees through the brightly red halls of the Royal Arch and found themselves at the ceremony of initiation into "Kadoshs" (30th degree) with its mournful gray and black colors, Teutonic crosses, calls for vengeance, awesome eagles and swords, symbols of unrelenting struggle, and the motto *Vincere aut mori* ("To Win or to Die")? Here the point is life-and-death struggle with those who do not subscribe to the Masonic ideals. Masonry views the "initiate" of the Kadosh degree as a super-human warrior and avenger, who has "cleansed himself" from the filth of prejudice and who stands "on the other side" of good and evil, as an embodiment of the punitive right hand of the Masonic movement.

What can be said of the actual origins of the Masonic movement?

How did the aprons, trowels and mittens of stonemasons (and stone was the only building material at the time) give way to the vestments of the Crusaders, the Templars and conquering knights?

Stonemasons took pride in their ancient trade, in the knowledge which enabled them to erect masterpieces of everlasting beauty, such as the Parthenon and Palmyra, the pyramids and the Luxor Palace, statues of Pharaohs and the Sphinx, religious temples and military fortifications, monasteries and castles; they cherished the secrets of their trade and kept them away from the prying eyes. Finishing work in one place, they moved to other places, often to other countries, and gradually they developed certain signs and symbols to tell fellow masons from strangers and to keep the latter at bay. Not just guild traditions but also a specific lore, ethics, legends, myths and morals were developing in the Masonic communities.

As for the "ancient rules" honored by the British Masons, one of the oldest guides known to us, the *Regius* manuscript of 1390, was written in verse. The legend about the architect of the Temple of Solomon, killed by greedy apprentices, was current even at that time, just as was "canonized" the story of King Solomon who, amazed by the discipline and cohesion of 130,000 masons, who had unquestionably obeyed Hiram Abiff (Adoniram), had decided upon the architect's death to establish an organization which would be the foundation of a symbolic, universal "Temple of Solomon." Its symbol, the golden snake which crawled out of Jerusalem, would over millennia ring the globe, enter the capital of his kingdom from the opposite side and bite its own tail! That would be the culmination of the cause bequeathed by Solomon.

That impressive and ambitious legend conveyed the idea of a transition from the occupational organization of stonemasons to a universal organization of associates who would be "masons" only in name.

The "secret" word of the Master, mentioned in the legend of Adoniram, was known as early as 1550. It was pronounced variously as Maughbin, Mahabone and Matchpin, and it derived from the Hebrew phrase "Flesh comes off bone," presumably said when the body of the architect of the Jahveh Temple was found. As time went on it came to mean the need for those initiated into "Masters" to keep everything earthly and

mundane off from the eternal service to the "Brotherhood" and its cause.

People from other urban estates, including nobility and even royals, rather quickly, in historical terms, took over seats in Masonic lodges, crowding out actual masons. Today's researcher is hard put to find out who formed such Masonic lodges and with what purpose. It is a fact, however, that they were formed. In this context, Knight justly points out the innate "potential of a secret society cutting across class divisions to embrace aristocrats, gentry, professional men and elements of the expanding middle class. It was to be a brotherhood which would put a string to pull into the hand of every member, and strings enough in the hands of its shadowy controllers to manipulate events—like puppet masters behind the scenes."¹⁷ (Gelli, it should be remembered, also likened himself to a puppeteer directing events in Italy from behind the scenes.)

The relationship between the masons, builders of castles and temples, and their customers was stronger than one may presume from the conventional picture of builders—apprentices, fellow crafts and masters—who had to spend their nights in out-buildings, lodges, next to their work site.

Castles, fortresses and churches took decades and even hundreds of years to build and demanded large inputs of labor, materials and money. Naturally, very complex relationships between the customers and contractors evolved in the course of construction work. It was not always that the contractors fully depended on their customers. Both secular and religious dignitaries set much store by the masters' ability and desire to erect impressive, strong and beautiful buildings. So the builders were paid handsomely for their craft and for the shipping and processing of materials. Masters were especially high paid. The cream of the masons' team—the contractors, the architect and his assistants—got even more. (Small wonder that a conflict between better paid masters and fellow crafts served as the plot for the legend of the Temple of Solomon.) Sometimes aristocrats and church dignitaries incurred huge debts to have construction work completed to guarantee the security of their influence, power and possessions.

¹⁷St. Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

It seems that the masons' leaders, the customers — owners of castles and fortresses — and the town authorities were in many ways interdependent. Some of the contractors could even build premises for themselves before fulfilling contracts for their customers.

That situation was fertile soil for usurers, the forerunners of today's financiers and bankers. The Templars were not averse to usury either.

The Templars started the first banks, introduced financial obligations, and established what can be called a system of checks and money orders. They used the money thus earned to build more castles and fortresses, to become the country's second ranking power and to lay claim to ultimate dominance. Knighthood itself produced its own traditions to "sanctify" its orders, introduced masters' degrees and set apart an institution of the privileged "Perfectibilists."

Hence the inevitability of a clash between the increasingly cosmopolitan orders of knights, which had gained not just strength but also economic influence, on the one hand, and the royal dynasties of the European countries and the Church, on the other; indeed, the knights were slipping out of the Church's hands and even competed with it in their crusades. When they had set up their own state, the capital of which, Jerusalem, became the site of the headquarters of many orders, the antagonism of the knights-cum-businessmen, the rising class of burghers, craftsmen, tradesmen, builders' guilds — i.e., all the pre-bourgeois strata — toward the structures laid down by the Church and secular absolutism and toward feudal arbitrariness, grew even stronger. Secret "brotherhoods" and societies were born of that struggle over the centuries; they established contacts with each other, sought mutual protection and relied on the more enterprising sections of society.

Could there have taken shape at that time structures which eventually evolved into Masonry?

Students of Freemasonry are not unanimous on that score. Some of them believe that the orders of knighthood were rigorously Catholic and were formed under the Vatican's direction. In their view, except for some ideological points and rituals, there is no true continuity between the past and present Templars and Crusaders. Many specialists dismiss the argument that after the Templars were suppressed by Philip IV the Fair

in 1314, some of the members of the order found sanctuary in Scotland, whose knights were fighting Philip's relations, the rulers of England.

Even allowing for the desire of the "Scots" and the upper league of Masonry, who went legal in the 17th-18th centuries, to embellish and stretch back their genealogy, to make the movement look more respectable and "to put aprons on over armor," there is some ground behind their claims to continuity.

We should not forget that the Templars had firm positions not only in France but also in neighboring countries, including the German lands, Spain and Portugal. They had "brethren" in other orders of knighthood, some of which have survived, in one form or another, to our day. The Teutonic Order, for instance, had been the scourge of Eastern and Middle Europe all the way till the Battle of Grünewald in 1410. The Order of the Sword, too, was pursuing a policy of *Drang nach Osten* at that time. The Knights of Malta, as ancient as the Templars, have survived till our time and are out to assert themselves on the international scene. They mesh with the Masonic orders in many ways and have common leaders. It seems no chance that the P-2 headquarters was at one time in the same house as the residence of the Knights of Malta (via Condotti in Rome).

Similar relics could well survive in some fragments of the Templars' Order. They could continue in France, where the Templars had quite a few backers among aristocrats, primarily those opposed to the royal dynasty. If these reasons are valid, it becomes clearer why aristocrats and even members of the European royal families rushed into Masonic lodges.

A few years ago three Britons, TV journalist Henry Lincoln, comparative literature expert Richard Leigh and psychologist Michael Baigent, attempted to "put time back into joint." Having worked for over a decade in the archives of the National Library of France and in libraries of other European countries and having interviewed dozens of specialists, they published a book in 1982.¹⁸

They concentrated on a series of unusual events in south-west France in late last and early this century. It was that area that was the birthplace of the Cathars' movement, branded by the Vatican as the "Albigensian heresy" (after the Albi township in

¹⁸M. Baigent, R. Leigh, H. Lincoln, *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, Corgi Books, London, 1982.

Languedoc); moreover, the Vatican, as has been mentioned above, mounted a "crusade" (westward!) against them in 1209, which culminated in the seizure of the Montségur fortress in 1244.

Retracing year by year the lost "treasures" and documents of the Cathars, the researchers concentrated on the evolution of the Order of Templars, founded in 1118 as the Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon. The famous order, the fountainhead of most of the above mentioned "Jerusalem" orders of knights, had itself sprung from the little-known *Ordre de Sion* as its "military arm" designed, *inter alia*, to wrench Jerusalem from the Moslem hands. That latter order had to all appearances taken shape in Jerusalem on the threshold of the 11th century and was called *Chevaliers de l'Ordre de Notre Dame de Sion* after the Jerusalem Priory of Sion, called *Sainte-Marie du Mont Syon et du Saint-Esprit*.

Both orders virtually had common Grand Masters till 1188. They parted ways after the defeat of the Crusaders and the fall of Jerusalem, and, though there remained some tenuous links between the two, the rout of the Templars did not affect the Order of Sion. Jean de Gisors, who became the Order's Grand Master in 1306, introduced the principles of "hermetic Masonry" and practised occultism. The Order adopted the name "Hormuz" after the Egyptian mystic who in 46 A.D. established in Alexandria a secret "Order of Initiates," whose symbol was a rosy cross. "Hormuz" figures in the names of Masonic lodges in various countries even today.¹⁹

The authors of the book cite some evidence on the contribution of the Order of Sion to the split of the Christian Church, on its role in developments relevant to Italian Renaissance, specifically the fate of the Medici family, and also note the Order's connections with most of the European monarchies. Material concerning the participation of the Order and its Grand Masters in the establishment of Rosicrucianism, a movement which eventually produced the elite of Freemasonry, is especially fascinating.

The keynote of the book, the concept of a "conspiracy through the centuries," which highlighted the specific character of the Order of Sion, could not help drawing sharp criticism. The auth-

¹⁹M. Baigent et al., *op. cit.*, p. 124.

ors were said to be "ignorant" and to have produced a "grotesque." However, the book was carefully documented and verifiable, and it was far from easy to deny what was written in it.

The authors believe that the basic principles of the esoteric rites of today's Freemasonry originated in the age of knighthood, specifically, among the Albigensians. They contend that the poem *Parzival*, written by the Bavarian minstrel Wolfram von Eschenbach somewhere between 1195 and 1216, was one of the basic works for evolving regulations governing the "initiation" and advancement of members toward the summit of "illumination," the "Holy Grail." Von Eschenbach himself heard the legend of the Holy Grail (and his interpretation of it substantially differs from the Christian version) from one Flegetanis, who presumably "was descended from Solomon and born of a family which has long been Israelite."²⁰

Many authors refer to *Parzival* as to a kind of esoteric encyclopaedia on Masonic symbolism. Professor Ward, quoted above, also mentions the Knight of the Holy Grail. Von Eschenbach himself could hardly have guessed what role his poem was destined to play in the history of Freemasonry.

Generally speaking, the threads of history, weaving through centuries and millennia, are far more lasting and ramified than one can expect. The Templars, for instance, took a practical interest in Hinduism and Buddhism and had links with Ismaili sects of the Assassins. Their men travelled as far as the Mongol hordes, communicated with their chieftains and supposedly even showed them the way to Rus.

(In 1921 Mongolia was ruled for a few months by Baron Roman Nicolaus von Ungern-Sternberg, who had fled there from the Russian revolution. He claimed to have descended (as Ungern) from people of the tribes of Attila, who had gone westward, and (as Sternberg) from a "Master's" dynasty of Crusaders who had eventually settled in the Baltic. During the rule of Paul I (1796-1801) in Russia, one Baron Ungern-Sternberg was the "provincial Grand Master" of the Riga lodges.

Was it a quirk of history? Undoubtedly so, and it did not last long: the "crazy Baron," who perpetrated unbelievable atrocities, was shortly seized. But the links he spoke about did exist.

²⁰Ibid., p. 306.

The Baron was connected with Freemasonry, took an interest in Buddhism and claimed to be a "clairvoyant.")

The supposition that orders of knights and masons' guilds were bound by very real links in the Middle Ages and in the epoch of late feudalism does not seem absurd and certain parallels between the conceptual and mythological tenets of the two are beyond doubt.

But let us go over to the age when fresh forces started fermenting in Europe and when the elixir of Freemasonry spilled out of the alchemists' cucurbits onto the scene of mass political action; when social movements, in the shaping of

which the secret "brotherhoods" had had a hand, went out
into the streets; when the "underground
River Alpheus" rose to
the surface.

THE "HEROIC PERIOD"

A slow, hesitant dawn was breaking over Europe, enveloped in the darkness of the Middle Ages. In Rome, capital of the Papal province, an imprudent word could well land one in the executioner's hands. Yet, there were going up the flames of Renaissance, producing thinkers of genius and incomparable masterpieces of art, and the Inquisition, fearing its impact on the minds and hearts, went about its dark business. Giordano Bruno, who took a bold look into outer space, was burnt at the stake. Galileo Galilei was forced to repent. Thomas More and Tommaso Campanella, two great thinkers who visualized an ideal, harmonious humankind, were harassed and persecuted. The monarchy and the Inquisition relied on obscurantism and blind faith and tried to stifle anything that could pose a threat to their dominance and prosperity.

But the earth did move, as Galilei supposed, it did! The tread of history was inexorable. Fresh forces assailed the mossy foundation of feudalism and tried to break free from the bonds that fettered them. Manufactories kept growing, crafts evolved into industry, commercial and financial relations were becoming more and more important, detracting from the aristocrats' privileges and making the townfolk more and more independent. Heresies and dissent found their way into monasteries.

That was the time of the great accumulation of forces which were destined to blow up the old system. Yet, initially there were formidable obstacles in the way of reason, which rebelled against the stiff dogmas of the Church, in the way of quests for the philosophical truth and the desire to understand the world so as to make it better. Free thought hid in the basements of secret brotherhoods and was working there on the quiet. Its

path was anything but straight. It wound its way through the catacombs, mixing with mysticism, alchemy, a search for the elixir of life and the philosopher's stone (the key to eternity and boundless wealth) or, like Doctor Faust, appealed to the spirits. What it found at the bottom of its cucurbits was gun powder, china and effective medicines. The way of those hundreds of secret laboratories of the future lay from alchemy to chemistry, from prejudice to science, from wild guesses to the ideas of Enlightenment.

Luther's rebellion against Rome, which split half Europe off the Vatican, awakened independent thinking. Now everyone could relate to faith direct rather than through dogmas and God's deputy on earth. Protestantism made broader room for reason, individual initiative and creativity. That wave brought forth a brilliant and original thinker, Jakob Böhme (1575-1624), an elder of the cobblers' guild from the township of Hoerlitz in Silesia. He argued that the world should be cognized through one's own "experimental knowledge" and that man as a free agent could either save or ruin himself. One could achieve one's goals through understanding the laws of Nature, in which Böhme included the religious sentiment. He saw the Trinity in his "visions," under the influence of which he supposedly wrote his books, as "a triumphant, fermenting, fluid being, which, like Nature, contains within itself all the forces." Having deified the human spirit, he did the same to matter. In other words, he arrived at the idea of a material god.

Jan Amos Komensky (John Comenius — 1592-1670) was another indubitable influence on the condition and development of the general trends of thought in the period in addition to Böhme and the German physician and alchemist Paracelsus (1491-1543), whose views were clearly mystic (and, perhaps, for that reason became so widespread). Komensky, an outstanding humanitarian thinker, had been educated by the Protestant community of Bohemian Brethren, which wielded much influence in Bohemia and some other European states. He was a major reformer of educational systems and for many years lived in exile in Poland, Sweden, Britain and the Netherlands.

In 1641 Samuel Hartlib, his friend and associate, who lived in Britain, suggested to the British Parliament that Komensky be invited to assist in the organization of a national education system and in the establishment of a university. Komensky sub-

mitted a draft reform to Parliament in 1647. That was how the abbreviation SCHOLA – Sapienter Cogitare Honeste Operare Loqui Argute (“to think wisely, to act nobly and to speak aptly”) – came into being. The Czech enlightener indeed took a broad view of the school!

His world outlook was very close to that of Johann Valentin Andrea, considered the initiator of the rebirth of the Rose-Croix movement (Rosicrucians), the immediate predecessors of Freemasonry. In 1644 Komensky wrote a treatise entitled *General Advice on Rectifying Human Affairs*¹, in which he put forth ideas of universal awakening (*Panegersia*) and enlightenment (*Panau-gia*). That part of his treatise was published in Amsterdam in 1662. Komensky worked on a project of establishing a “Collegium of Light,” which would concern itself with the universal “propagation of wisdom” so as to unite people in order to transform society. He viewed the Universe as a unity of three worlds, namely, divine ideas, visible nature and the man-made world.

Komensky, who was Andrea’s friend and associate and who shared many of Böhme’s views, was one of the founders of the philosophy of Enlightenment, absorbed in many ways by those who at that time were shaping up Masonry and formulating its doctrines. At the same time he gave in his works pride of place to the human intellect and its ability to grasp the true essence of things and phenomena, though he did allow for religion and mystic visions.

The “third estate,” the bourgeoisie and the more active social strata in urban and rural communities, wanted an ideology and religious views that would meet in the best possible way their practical needs and sanctify their goals. That approach was shared by some representatives of the old society, namely, by those who realized the necessity of change or tried to come to grips with the new trends so as to prevent them from erupting into a catastrophe that would wipe off their privileges.

The guilds, mentioned above, which cut across the frontiers between estates, offered a most convenient existing form of relationship of the artisans and the middle strata, and their customers, which stood higher up the social ladder. Those guilds, insular and close-knit, offered protection to all “outsiders.” At

¹ See Iohannis Amos Comenii, *De rerum humanarum emendatione consultatio catholica*, Pragae, in Academia, 1966.

the same time an influx of scholars, lawyers, physicians, and nobility added to the guilds' prestige.

The guild of "free stonemasons" was especially suitable to that end: it offered a ready-made form for the social movement in which nonorthodox religious views could be combined with practical purposes and in which at the same time an elite could be formed to direct future change.

The guild was international (in terms of that age): the stonemasons were called "free" because they had the right to cross without hindrance from country to country as they received new orders. They made contacts in all those countries because they specialized in religious architecture — the building of churches, temples and monasteries — and their high skills and wealth gave them prestige. Their specific traditions, occupational symbolism and original lore were a substitute, as it were, for the genealogical attributes of the nobility and held an appeal even to aristocrats.

It is conventionally believed that it was in Britain that the occupational lodges of the guild of "free stonemasons" began to evolve into spiritual organizations. Some researchers, however, are of the opinion that their predecessors had been the brotherhoods of Italian, Comacini (Commacine) Masons, among the first in Europe to reach the pinnacle of their trade.

Many European countries must have been fertile soil for the evolution of Masonry. Perhaps, some other prestigious guilds (such as jewellers' and merchants' which had well-ramified external contacts), as well as stonemasons', could become the embryos of such associations. But here we step onto the treacherous ground of speculation, because only documentary evidence of the emergence of Masonry (as we know it today) from the stonemasons' guilds of Britain and Scotland has so far been studied.

Knight believes that the first "Speculative" Masons appeared in Scotland and points to John Boswell, Laird of Auchinlech, as the first nonoperative Mason to have joined a lodge: he was accepted to the Lodge of Edinburgh in 1600. The first such Mason in Britain was Elias Ashmole, an antiquarian and founder of Oxford's Ashmolean Museum, who became a member in 1646.² Incidentally, he took a keen interest in Rosicrucianism, the ideas

² St. Knight, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

of which, as has been mentioned above, had been formulated by the German theologian Johann Valentin Andrea in the 1620s. According to the authors of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, Andrea was the "navigator" or "helmsman" (i.e., Grand Master) of the Order of Sion from 1637 to 1654. (He was succeeded in that post by the scientists Robert Boyle and Isaac Newton.)³

It was very fast that artisans were replaced by nobility in the lodges. For example, in 1670 the Aberdeen Lodge had thirty-nine "accepted" members while only ten remained "operative" masons. As time went on, actual masons and builders dropped out of the lodges altogether. Men of fashion began to form their own gentlemen's lodges.⁴

Another fact that contributed to such a transformation was the decline of the building trade, once an "industrial aristocracy." The latest major Gothic buildings, the glory (and a source of large earnings) of stonemasons, date back to the early 15th century, when the King's Chapel in Cambridge was finished.

Now the lodges were masonic only in name. Incidentally, Masonry, as we know it today, had begun to take shape long before the four London lodges united in a Grand Lodge in 1717. The process took more than a century. The Masonic movement had been sweeping Europe like brush fire ever since its official birthday and the subsequent publication in 1723 of the Masonic Manifesto, *Constitutions*, written by the Scottish Mason James Anderson who lived in London.

Anderson's friend Theophilus Desaguliers, a Doctor of Law, a Fellow of the Royal Society and chaplain to the Prince of Wales, spread the influence of the organization with remarkable ease. In 1731 he accepted to the brotherhood in the Hague the Duke of Lorraine, who, having married Maria Theresa of Austria, ascended to the Austrian throne. In 1737 he recruited the Prince of Wales. Nobility flocked into the lodges, which had been earlier dominated by the middle classes. In 1730 six out of the nine Grand Masters of European countries were aristocrats.

Masonic lodges, like sea waves, now rolled from London to the continent, now withdrew to the British Isles. Frenchman Desaguliers stood at the sources of today's Masonry in Britain and supervised the writing of the first Masonic statutes, while

³ M. Baigent et al., op. cit., p. 133.

⁴ St. Knight, op. cit., p. 19.

Masonic lodges which began to be established in Paris (there were five by 1730) had British sponsors. They were led by Jacobites, supporters of James II Stuart, who had been banished from Britain in 1688 and settled in Paris. The first "regular" lodge in Paris, recognized by the British in 1732, had the sanction of Earl Charles Radclyffe of Derwentwater, known for his close relationship with the Rosicrucians. That Briton became the first Grand Master of French Freemasonry. Shortly afterward "British-type" lodges appeared in Bordeaux, Rouen and some other French cities.

Similar lodges were started in Madrid in 1728 and in Gibraltar in 1729. Their "godfather" was Duke Warton, one of the first Grand Masters of the Grand Lodge of London. He sanctioned the publication of Anderson's *Constitutions*, which prescribed not to accept "silly atheists" and "dissolute libertarians." Incidentally, the *Constitutions* did not mention, except in the introduction, Christianity. It was not mere oversight: Duke Warton himself was a member of London's "demonological" Hell-fire Lodge, which was closed in 1721 on charges of heresy. Warton, who on top of all that was connected with the Jacobites, had to flee. The one-time "satanist" established Masonic lodges in Spain and Gibraltar, then converted to Catholicism and ended his days in a Spanish monastery. Radclyffe, the Grand Master of French Freemasonry, ended up worse: he travelled secretly to Britain, was arrested, charged with a conspiracy and executed.

Those dramatic fates and events at the dawn of today's Masonry illustrate, inter alia, the worth of the assertions made in various Masonic constitutions and regulations that the Masons "do not meddle into politics" or "discuss religious issues." (That tale, incidentally, was echoed 250 years later by Pier Carpi, a P-2 member and a confidant of Licio Gelli, an archconspirator and politico.)

Masonry continued its march across Europe. In Italy it sprouted around the more developed commercial and manufacturing centers, and Florence with its strong guilds was paramount among them. The Medici family, formerly merchants, who ruled the city had a very independent view of Christianity, leaned toward Greek philosophy and the arts and sponsored leading painters and sculptors, among them Botticelli and Michelangelo. The Florence goldsmiths' guild, famous throughout Europe and the Mediterranean, which was led by Benvenuto

Cellini, also was fertile soil for the assertion of primordial Masonic concepts and beliefs. The first official Masonic lodge in Florence appeared in 1733, when the star of the Medici was already setting. "Jacobitical suppers" under the sign of the "Great Architect of the Temple of Solomon" were held in Rome, next to the Vatican, as early as c. 1700. According to Silvano Spinetti, Masonry first appeared in Italy in early 1700: that was in Livorno (Leghorn), "the traditional commercial base of Britain in the Tyrrhenian Sea and the site of a large Israelite community."⁵ "Knights of Misraim" met in secret masses in Palermo, capital of Sicily, long before the establishment of the lodges, while noblemen and leading merchants of Venice and Friuli held esoteric gatherings under the guise of card games. In Venice a center of the propagation of esoteric knowledge was an Israelite community; the name of its site, Ghetto, so called after a small nearby metalworks, became an appellative noun.

Masonic societies emerged in Milan, Verona and Padua. Freemasonry flourished in Naples, capital of "the kingdom of both Sicilies," where it enjoyed the support of the royal family. Lodges in Florence, Rome and Naples tried to recruit first and foremost the cream of the financial and business world. Francocci stresses in his work that their emergence was explained by a desire "to put the world on new economic and social foundations."⁶ At the same time those Masonic lodges were deferential toward aristocrats and monarchs and sought to win their support and admit them into membership.

The first "British lodge" in Hamburg appeared in 1733 and Count Schaumburg-Lippe, admitted into Freemasonry in London in the 1720s, played an important role in its establishment. He involved in the movement the heir to the Prussian throne, who had arrived there with his father, Frederick I. In 1738 Frederick II, King of Prussia, was admitted to the Lodge Absalom and eventually became the Grand Master of the Berlin-based National Grand Lodge of the Three Globes and the leader of Prussian Freemasonry.

Freemasonry spread into Russia, too. In 1731 Lord Lowell, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of London, appointed captain John Phillips the "provincial Grand Master of all Russia."

⁵ G. Silvano Spinetti, *Gruppi di pressione e interessi privati nella pubblica amministrazione*, Vol. 2, Ed. "Solidarismo," Rome, Bologna, 1966, p. 45.

⁶ G. Francocci, op. cit., p. 192

Initially his lodge united only foreigners residing in St Petersburg, predominantly Britons, and it was not before 1740, when James Keith became head of the lodge, that Russians began to be admitted.

The movement infiltrated into Poland predominantly from Saxony. The newly established chapters of the Dresden Lodge of Three White Eagles readily accepted offspring of the more aristocratic families, including the Mniszezs, the Potockis, the Oginskis and the Wielgorskis.

Freemasonry made remarkably fast progress in America. One Daniel Cox, living in Britain, was the head of Pennsylvania's Masonic lodges from 1730 on, but already in 1733 he was replaced by Bostonian Henry Price. He became the Grand Master of all American Freemasonry. The first lodge that was independent from the Grand Lodge of London was established in Philadelphia with the vigorous participation of Benjamin Franklin, who had taken an interest in Freemasonry on his visit to the British capital in 1725-1726. He was 19 at the time while the admittance age was 25, so he could not join the Masons. Having returned to Philadelphia, Franklin started a secret society, the Leathernapron Club, the progenitor of America's book-publishing and philosophical societies. In 1734 Franklin, still a very young man, became Grand Master. Freemasonry spread through the French lodges to Canada and Central American colonies.

In other words, the movement sprouted and was quickly gaining ground in both Europe and America. It was joined by several monarchs (those of Britain, Austria and Prussia) and also by those who, like Franklin, were to play an outstanding role in history.

The Catholic Church was the first to size up the possible situation and made efforts to block the progress of those who threatened to deny the Church its traditional influence on the royal families and on the spiritual life of society. In 1738 Pope Clement XII issued the bull *In Eminenti*. It read, inter alia: "We have learned that there have been formed and are going stronger from day to day centers, unions, groups, aggregations or convents under the name ... of Freemasons, which admit persons regardless of religion or sect." They, the Pope went on, "establish certain laws, certain statutes which unite them and which, in particular, oblige them, on pain of the severest

punishment and by virtue of an oath taken on the Scriptures, to keep absolutely secret everything taking place at their assemblies... But as a crime out sooner or later in spite of any precaution, so that society and those assemblies have become so suspicious to the faithful that all the good men regard them today as an unequivocal sign of whichever perversion..."

The Pope noted "the great evil which is always born of those associations, a constant jeopardy to the tranquility of the state and to spiritual health" and concluded: "That is why we most expressly warn ... all the faithful, be they secular or religious officers,... against joining for any reason or pretext those centers, unions, groups, aggregations and convents; ... on the contrary, we order them entirely to keep away from those associations and assemblies on pain of excommunication."⁷

The jinni, however, could no longer be driven back into the bottle. Freemasonry kept expanding and involving the upper classes on an ever broader scale. It was digging in, too, preparing the ground for an onward march regardless of the ebb and flow of the public mood or of the turn of events. Opening up "downward," it was growing more and more insular at the top so that nothing could wrench from those upper tiers of the structure control over the lower ones.

The hierarchy of the "Masonic temple" was growing steadily regardless of the eccentric forms in which one fashionable trend or new-fangled rite, often associated with the name of some adventurer or con man, replaced another. The "three-degree" structure gave the movement a broad base. By introducing new privileged degrees and making them pronouncedly elite, Freemasonry attracted those who eventually formed its invisible core to direct the disparate and therefore very handy detachments of "builders of the Temple of Solomon."

It was not without opposition that the Masonic structures grew more involved: some members considered the process to be an infringement on the rights of the middle classes and a breach of the pompous declarations of equality in the "Brotherhood."

In 1740 the British nobility, no longer happy with the "three-degree" pattern and seeking to consolidate their dominance, established a superstructure, so to speak, the Royal Arch Chapter. In a few decades it was the royal family that controlled the

⁷ *L'Histoire*, No. 49, October 1982, p. 20.

summit of British Freemasonry: the Duke of Cumberland, the younger son of George II, became Grand Master and George IV and William IV sponsored the movement.

That "renewal" of Masonry was politically motivated: the conflict between lodges of ancient and accepted (modernistic) rites was rooted in the strife between estates and in internal divisions. The Jacobites, supporters of King James II Stuart, who had fled to Paris from the 1688 revolution and been given sanctuary by King Louis XIV of France, would like to use Freemasonry to further their own ends. Their activities, especially those of Lord Andrew Ramsay (1680-1743), known as Chevalier de Ramsay, contributed substantially to the establishment of the Scottish Rite Masonic society, which was seeking Scotland's support for the restoration of the Stuarts. The ruling Hanoverian dynasty also made use of Masonic swords. At some later time the Scottish Rite doctrines provided the meeting ground for the rival groupings. Another factor of unification was that both sides claimed to be direct descendants of the Templars, and still another the assertions that all credit for the remaking of "heathen" and ancient Judaic Masonry went to the Knights of Malta and that the Scottish Rite Masons alone had the prerogative to recognize "regular" lodges among the Masonic societies mushrooming all over Europe.

Scottish Rite Masonry spread through France into Scandinavia, the German lands and Italy.

Sir Ramsay's ideas were shared by the German Baron Karl Gottlieb von Hund, who introduced a "Strict Observance" rite, which accepted predominantly aristocrats. He claimed to be in direct communication with the mysterious "unknown superiors," who represented the surviving order of the Knights Templar. The hallmarks of his own Order were reverence for military traditions and "Teutonic discipline."⁸

⁸ The Teutonic Order branched off the Order of Saint John (Hospitallers of Saint John, subsequently the Knights of Malta) in 1198 as an order of German-born crusaders. In 1226 the Teutonic Order struck root in the Chelm land, which they used as a staging area for advance against the Slavic Pruss (hence Prussia) tribe and against Baltic and Russian lands. The Order's overriding goal was to conquer lands to the east (*Drang nach Osten*). The rout at Lake Peipus at the hands of Prince Alexander Nevsky of Novgorod in 1240 checked the Order's expansionism but it was not before the Battle of Grünewald in 1410 that its influence was ultimately undermined.

The Scandinavian Rite, which aspired to a special status, was pervaded with mysticism. Its growth in the north of Europe was facilitated by the influence of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), a Swedish philosopher and adviser to King Charles XII. Swedenborg laid emphasis on communication with the spirits and the nether world and preached that those who were predestined to attain that would reach the "invisible world," "New Jerusalem" in an occult way, solely through visions and moral self-improvement.

His postulates made the basis of occult exercises which are still performed in the higher echelons of Freemasonry. Swedenborg's "system" is especially popular in the US and is practised by quite a few Swedish lodges.

When Europe had reached a point of profound change in the second half of the eighteenth century, the top "tiers" of Freemasonry had to decide about their contribution to social processes. Students of the Masonic movement differ in their evaluation of that choice. Some of them take the lead of abbot Barriel and argue that every revolutionary upheaval, every "leftward" turn of history was the work of the Masons, a result of their "conspiracy" which has been determining the historical development of Europe in the past few centuries. The reactionary clerical and ultra-right fascist press has been claiming consistently a "sinister" role of Freemasonry and worldwide Masonic conspiracy, which the Nazis with their anti-Semitism called "Jewish-Masonic."

Those historians who take issue with such arguments deny any substantial influence of the Masonic movement on European history; there are views in-between, too.

It seems that we should delve deeper for an answer that would not be tainted by prejudice or prompted by some *a priori* position. It is not likely to be a cut and dried answer, either. It would be clearly wrong to deny the influence of Masonry, which has penetrated many economic and political centers of power, gained dominant positions in ideology, had links with ruling dynasties and their opposition simultaneously, and manipulated concepts and beliefs that are absolutely incompatible. Neither seems it reasonable to exaggerate its power and influence to the exclusion of everything else and to hold that its goals have remained intact through the centuries and that all its main contingents have been united from the outset.

Secret societies can play a big, sometimes a very big role in history but never can they succeed in working against its laws. Historical development is controversial. Social formations are born of the clashes of far broader forces and factors than those constituting the base of Freemasonry, which has infiltrated a relatively thin upper layer of society.

Any social movement, even one originating at some definite place or springing from a homogeneous group of people, has to reckon with factors which exceed its capacities if it wants to survive and continue. My opponents may argue: hasn't Masonry effectively evaded the risks inherent in a too narrow orientation by having penetrated simultaneously the antagonistic social forces, the aristocracy and the third estate? Aren't its adaptability, flexibility and all-acceptance the factors of its remarkable viability over the centuries? Hasn't Freemasonry always tried to relate itself to the most diverse trends of thought, science and religion? Hasn't it been changing along with society itself?

All these questions to a large extent answer themselves. Yet an analysis that would be more related to the concrete historical setting is in order. If we try to trace some of the basic ideological structures of Freemasonry, those which stretch back into the remote past, we may very well find answers in their interface with the real motive forces and events of history and with societal development.

As for those forces in Freemasonry which were capable of directing and correcting its advance through the centuries, they should be looked for most likely in its higher echelons, while the lower ranks absorb those social strata which gravitated toward the movement as the vehicle of their own vital interests or as a powerful ally. Naturally, in that case we cannot rule out instances of aberration, mystification, idealization and the mistaking of intermediate for ultimate forms. What makes a study of the matter in hand even more difficult is that the lower strata of Freemasonry are more transparent and easier to understand while the upper echelons, in the Masonic lingo, either emanate "invisible light" or are seen as "visible darkness."

But let us not succumb to veils of mystery, fleurs-de-lis and other attributes of Masonic symbolism: really, code phrases and carnival masks belie the very earthly, pragmatic interests of those whose motivation is far less exotic than the garb they don.

Francocci says that "the same light was propagated everywhere" in spite of the variety of rites in existence, such as the Scottish Rite of Saint Andrew, the Grand Globe, the Clermont Capital, the Chosen Coens, the Illuminati, the Filaleti Rite, Martinism, the Rite of Misraim, the "Strict Observance" and "Large Observance" Rites and the Egyptian Order.

What he meant was that the doctrine was one and only, never affected by the seeming diversity of forms in which it was served.

Freemasonry proclaimed for every individual (which was far from the real case) a possibility to "be admitted to the truth" and enter the realm of freedom and justice, but it was to the bourgeoisie, constituting the bulk of its membership, that it offered emancipation and equal rights. That incipient class, young, gifted and enterprising, was multiplying its factories, and developing the productive forces; it viewed philosophy, natural sciences and technological know-how not from the angle of "pure knowledge" (although it needed that, too) but far more pragmatically, in terms of their efficient and prompt application. The bourgeoisie needed a social set-up that would give it the broadest possible room for capital investment and tear down the barriers of outdated feudal privileges. It needed a religious system that would not suppress its initiative and sanctify enterprise as "Divine providence." Freemasonry fitted the ticket. By proclaiming the "rights of the individual" (primarily of the well-heeled individual) and profit-making, it advocated as the most sensible social set-up one which would enable the more enlightened, "gifted" members of society, the "chosen" ones, to create more decent living conditions for the rest, the "ignorant," the "spoilt" and the "passive."

Many of the medieval social movements evolved as heresies and sects and Freemasonry proved the most efficient one among them. It sifted through many beliefs, myths and faiths to produce criteria which would in the best possible way justify the goals of the bourgeois class, which was rising from the entrails of feudalism. That justification was meant not just for the bourgeoisie itself but for the whole of society: the "builders of the Temple" presented freedom for themselves and for the proprietors as universal freedom, called the pragmatic and cynical world based on pecuniary relations the "realm of reason" (or even of "eternal reason") and passed off the

elevation of the bourgeoisie to the level of the higher classes as "universal equality."

"This eternal reason," Frederick Engels wrote in *Anti-Dühring*, "was in reality nothing but the idealized understanding of the eighteenth century citizen, just then evolving into the bourgeois."⁹ And the Masonic doctrine "ennobling" profit-making became the most efficient tool for modifying the Christian dogmas to suit the bourgeoisie that was ascending to power.

The nature of the class that was coming formidable to the fore was dual. While sweeping aside the citadels of feudalism, it was paving the way for the worldwide rule of moneybags. To win the mass of people over to its side, however, it had to present its specific interests as universal and pose as a revolutionary force.

We should bear this in mind because the duality of the program of the revolutionary bourgeoisie projected itself onto the principles of Freemasonry as well.

France is one graphic example. The French revolution was not a "palace coup." Faced with extreme stubbornness and historical blindness of the absolute monarchy, aristocracy and clergy, the third estate, the bourgeoisie, had to go much farther than its Masonic leaders had expected. Not long before the revolution many of the latter had amicably consorted in the lodges with such "brothers" as members of the royal family, dukes and counts of the court and other members of the upper classes. At that time they still hoped to "enlighten" the old ruling classes and directed their wrath primarily at the Catholic Church, which was fiercely resisting any social change.

Documents, memoirs and other evidence from that period put on record virtually every step of the bourgeois revolution. But far scantier evidence on work within the lodges and on the line of action of those who eventually became the leaders of the revolution is available. Some historians tend to draw the line between their social and Masonic activities; they argue that in politics every "brother" acted in accordance with his own political views and confined to the lodge everything that linked him to the rest of the "brethren" through the Masonic doctrines.

⁹ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1987, p. 244.

A very unlikely version! Rather, what had been brimming in the lodges finally burst out into the open. The Masons' hour had come! Francocci supplies a clear-cut picture of changes in the function of Freemasonry depending on historical circumstances. While initially, at the stage of preparations, it performed what the author called a "pedagogical function" by evolving doctrines and training cadres, at the point when political actions were to be launched it acted "as a secret society, closing one cycle and going over to the formation of associations, designed to carry out what had matured in mentality."

"What is needed at that point is not just individual 'initiates'," he continues, "but numerous close-knit ranks, a phalanx that starts moving, first slowly but then inexorably gathers awesome momentum. And then — 'God's ire!'"¹⁰

French Freemasonry began to exercise its "pedagogical function" when it had advanced to the highest positions in society such dominant influences as Voltaire, Rousseau, d'Alembert and Diderot, who pointed the way to Camille Desmoulins, abbot Sieyès, Georges-Jacques Danton, Maximilien de Robespierre, Jean-Paul Marat, Victor Riqueti Mirabeau, Marie-Joseph La Fayette and Louis de Saint-Just.

The leading lodges in which those brilliant minds were concentrated were the Encyclopaedists and the Lodge of Sciences. The latter, otherwise known as the Lodge of Nine Sisters, was founded by Joseph-Jérôme de Lalande in 1769 and counted among its members Voltaire, Antoine-Nicolas de Condorcet, painter Jean-Baptiste Greuze, sculptor Jean-Antoine Houdon, the Montgolfier Brothers, the pioneers of aeronautics, Danton, Desmoulins and Sieyès. Benjamin Franklin, an envoy of the New World, also was a member.

It is hard to believe that Masonic philosophy and rites were the only subjects discussed by those brilliant minds at lodge sessions. No, even at that time they were looking forward eagerly to broad historical vistas opening up before them and tried to do what they could to speed up the advent of a great future.

Of course, as the time of decisive events drew nearer, they did not keep to their lodges: the time for talk was over, the time

¹⁰G. Francocci, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

to move had come. So the "phalanx" started advancing inexorably, terrifying even some of those who had helped get it moving. What had seemed purely conceptual, philosophic difference erupted into fierce clashes and violence in streets and squares. The language of philosophy was supplanted by the chopping sound of the guillotine, so called after its inventor, the well-known physician and Mason Joseph-Ignace Guillotin. Rousseau with his theory of a "social contract" and universal equality inspired the Jacobins, who, like the sansculottes, put all their trust in the slogans of the revolution. They believed that a couple of crushing blows at the foundations of property and social inequality were enough to bring about a society of universal justice, which would break the fetters of privileges and big property.

The people who had done so much for the victory over absolutism and for the establishment of the republic with its motto of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity amazingly quickly ended up under the knife of guillotine. The clash of classes proved far more formidable than encyclopaedic disputes. It was a paradox of the Revolution that it slaughtered its own sons: men of gifts and genius, who had been needed to shatter the fetters so that a new society should emerge from the entrails of the old, could now be cast aside.

Even the incorruptible Robespierre, who called in Paris a demonstration to honor the Supreme Being (the Masonic deity that was to supplant the retired Catholic God), was beheaded in cold blood along with a cohort of other revolutionary leaders. Now the bourgeoisie needed banks and guns in the streets in case the popular masses which had lifted them to power would get it into their heads to stage another rebellion. As for the preachers of liberty, they were growing dangerous!

The mentality of the smug bourgeois, which had now taken the place of "eternal reason," would not tolerate trouble-makers.

The bourgeois, merchants and bankers did not hurry to repeal the Declaration of Rights, which had received such an enthusiastic welcome. But presently they themselves were inflicting on the country the Bonapartist dictatorship and, eventually, a new empire. The ideas of defending the homeland evolved into plans of conquests, and more and more nations

began to respond to *La Marseillaise* as to the anthem of their enslavers.

The phenomenon of the "Thermidor" and Bonapartism, however, came out of the same forge which had spouted out the flames of the revolution: the "smiths" just did not want the "mob" to enjoy what was intended for the "chosen ones."

The October 1982 issue of the French journal *L'Histoire* was devoted entirely to a discussion of the ideological position of French Freemasonry on the eve of the revolution. Historian Gérard Gayot made use of the discussion to publish a series of Masonic treatises which were current in France at that time. They presented a generally moderate and even conservative image of the "brothers." "Equality signifies absolutely nothing. It is only possible in words," the statute of the Savoie Lodge read. "But it is very important that the Masonic lists never omit titles and that they address each other in all the lodges: brother-marquis or count such and such."¹¹ The Toulouse Masons believed: "Although Freemasonry equates all the estates, it is nevertheless true that one should listen more to men who occupy position of distinction in civilized society rather than to the plebeian."¹²

There were even more frank statements, such as: new entrants in the lodges "must belong to the free estates and be masters of their persons. A domestic can only be admitted as a brother-servant (with the responsibility of servicing the temple)... None of a vile and abject status can be admitted; rare exceptions should be made for artisans, be they even masters, especially where there are no guilds or corporations in existence. No workers, even fellows of the arts or crafts, can ever be admitted."¹³

Cash tollgate was the main obstacle to the entrance of people of an "abject status" into the ranks of the "chosen ones." According to Gayot, in 1781 a Charlesville bourgeois had to pay as much as four monthly wages of an arms manufactory worker in that city to be admitted into the first three degrees.

"After all that filtering," Gayot concludes, "Freemasonry inevitably acquired a bourgeois and aristocratic image and

¹¹ *L'Histoire*, No. 49, October 1982, p. 23.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 23, 25.

admittance to the Order became a sign of distinction (social segregation continued even in the Masonic ranks). Are a nobleman and a merchant brothers? Yes, but they don't meet even at the same temple! Are a physician and a cooper brothers? Yes, but the physician finds in his lodge a trader and a book merchant, while the cooper rubs shoulders in his with a galloon maker and a down trader, while the Grand Orient of France (the top tier of French Freemasonry with the function of general oversight. — *L.Z.*) may decide to close a lodge it finds 'ill-composed'!... The centralized structure of the Order (a hierarchy for brothers of the lower ranks was put into place in the 1740s) coincided to such an extent with the tradition of absolutism that presently many brothers began to blame the Grand Orient of France for 'despotism' and, despairing of finding democracy in Freemasonry, withdrew from it."¹⁴

A circular sent out by the Social Contract Lodge of Paris on November 20, 1790 (already after the revolution) is another eloquent document. At that time the royalists' scheming and their attempts to reverse the gains of the revolution provoked the wrath of the French people. The circular read, inter alia: "We are friends of the human race but our love for it does not degenerate into fanaticism... Children of nature, degraded to such an extent by perverse passions and prejudices of ignorance, we want to regenerate the earth, but not in a flood of blood... It is not in the fury of anarchy, more harmful than the cruelties of despotism, that we should cherish the new French Constitution."¹⁵

Freemasonry was well nigh invisible in the revolution. We only know that each of the main trends in the National Assembly of France formed its own Masonic lodge, and that is all. Too little for an organization which had numbered 600 lodges and a following of 30,000 on the eve of the revolution.¹⁶ Francocci's words again come to mind: when it is time to act, there is no need for a handful of initiates because phalanxes start moving.

The top echelons of Freemasonry were now active in practical affairs, jostling for positions of influence and pushing aside those "brothers" who were out of step with historical develop-

¹⁴ *L'Histoire*, No. 49, October 1982, p. 25.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

ments. As for the lower lodges, left to fend for themselves, they fell into slumbers. After the revolution four out of every five Masons preferred keeping their political convictions to themselves. The rest fell, in roughly equal numbers, under the influence of the Royalists, the Jacobins and Girondists. (The Royalists' clout is understandable: the future Louis XVIII had been a Freemason until 1789.)¹⁷

As for the lodges in the German lands and princedoms, Masons of royal and noble blood entrenched in them had totally subdued their bourgeois "brothers." While the French and British lodges were dominated in a sense by "Voltairianism" and while an appeal to reason was heard in them, most of the membership of the German lodges was averse to such sentiments. The occult belief in panaceas, visions and communication with the other world was the dominant mood in those lodges. Their members claimed to belong to the Knights Templar and dreamed of Teutonic knighthood. That mentality was in fact reactionary and eventually the stultified and crippled public thought leapt from humility to ideas of national arrogance and racism. It was only in the secret society of the Illuminati of Adam Weishaupt (1748-1830) in Bavaria that ideas of overthrowing tyranny and monarchies were smouldering. But organizationally the society was an exact replica of the Order of Jesuits, previously the effective rulers of Bavaria, who were so hateful to Weishaupt. His idea to enlist the help of European monarchs and even the Pope to overthrow tyranny showed that the Illuminati were weak and far from independent. Even the instructions issued by him sounded Jesuitic; one of them read, for example: "Our people must be enterprising, artful and persuasive. Be on the lookout primarily for the noble, the powerful and the rich. Sometimes you have even to denigrate yourself better to take hold of a man." But in spite of all those precautions and of the arcane lingo of the lodge, formed in Ingolstadt in 1781, it was closed as early as 1785, while Spartacus, as Weishaupt called himself, had to seek refuge with a noble patron in Regensburg.¹⁸

¹⁷ *L'Histoire*, No. 49, October 1982, p. 30.

¹⁸ See *Masonry: Its Past and Present*, Vol. 1., St Petersburg, 1915, p. 114 (in Russian).

Although the Illuminati are sometimes imputed considerable international influence, this view is a tribute to their opposition to tyranny rather than a reflection of their actual importance.

By and large, the centers of European Masonry vied with one another for influence in the lodges of neighboring countries, such as Russia. The history of Freemasonry in Russia deserves special attention.

It was introduced in the country, as has been said above, as a foreign influence: the first lodges were formed by Britons in St Petersburg in 1731. Swedes and Germans also jockeyed for influence; many of them had long served the Russian tsars and formed a sort of clans at the court. Masonic lodges offered them a means of keeping closer watch over political undercurrents and intrigues in St Petersburg and Moscow, and of advancing their followers to higher positions with an eye to not only the interests of their ethnic communities but also more far-reaching goals.

Sweden, for example, had for a few centuries been Russia's major rival, blocking her access to the Baltic and Barents seas. Peter the Great broke through the Swedish blockade and built a new capital on the Neva. Charles XII of Sweden attempted to conquer from Russia her western lands, but was defeated in the Battle of Poltava in 1709 and saw his hopes dashed.

The Swedish monarchs who joined Freemasonry leaned toward Zinnendorf's "Strict Observance" system, which stipulated the unquestioning obedience of "brothers" to higher degrees and of the lodges to the "mother" lodge headed by Swedish kings. A similar pattern was imposed on lodges in Russia.

As early as the 1730s and the 1740s, the German systems of Freemasonry were advanced especially vigorously by the Prussian Masons led by Frederick II, who was the Grand Master of the Order. He even recruited some of the Russian nobility, who were requested to perform functions that differed but little from spying. A large segment of the Russian masons was controlled by Frederick's Berlin Lodge of the Three Globes, which even kept their archives. Subsequently the Germans began to assert in St Petersburg and Moscow their own "Strict Observance" Rite, which incorporated Templar degrees and was named after Baron Hund.

The German Masonic orders' activity was anything but selfless. When Peter III, a Holstein prince who admired everything Prussian, became emperor of Russia in 1761, Prussia secured a peace treaty to its benefit and regained the lands it had lost in a war with Russia. Peter III himself directed Russia's Masonic lodges. His assassination by conspirators in 1762 and the ascension of Sophia Augusta Frederica of Anhalt-Zerbst, a German princess, to the St Petersburg throne as Catherine II, ushered in a long period of the flourishing of Freemasonry in Russia.

The empress wanted her rule to look liberal and posed as an "enlightened monarch." She was in correspondence with Voltaire and invited Diderot to join her court as a librarian. Though not patronizing Freemasonry (the empress had no liking for mysticism), she did not interfere with her courtiers' going in for Masonic doctrines. Russian noblemen, among them the Trubetskoys, the Golitsyns and the Vorontsovs, joined the lodges.

Meanwhile awareness of national goals began to dawn on Russian Freemasonry. That shift is usually associated with the names of Yelagin and Novikov. Ivan Perfilievich Yelagin, a commoner who joined the movement in 1750, frankly admitted in his diaries that he had been motivated by vanity: "Would I be the equal, though for a moment, of those people who were famous in society... And there was the tempting hope of securing patrons among noblemen through fraternity." His first impressions of Masonry were unfavorable. He found the rites "strange" and "senseless," and as for his hope to become "the equal" of noblemen through the lodge, "that dream presently disappeared," as he noted, because a person of position "is a brother only in imagination, but in fact a grandee."¹⁹

He did not take long to sort out Masonic intricacies and, what is most important, realized that the lodges could be used to promote a loftier goal than his personal well-being, namely, that of enlightenment in Russia. That idea shortly brought him into contact with Nikolai Ivanovich Novikov, a gentleman of not very aristocratic birth and the founder of Russian journalism. Novikov had retired from the army when he was 25 and in 1769 launched his first journal *Truten* (Drone-Bee).

¹⁹New Materials for Masonic Activities. *Diaries by I.P. Yelagin*, St Petersburg, 1864, p. 99 (in Russian).

Then followed the satirical journals *Pustomelia* (Chatter-Box), *Zhivopisets* (Painter) and *Koshelyok* (Purse), in which Novikov empathized with the third estate and lashed out at the ignorance and arrogance of the nobility by birth. He even dared to cross swords with the empress, who also published a journal, *Vsiakaya vsiachina* (Odds and Ends). Novikov went into book publishing as well, putting out dictionaries and guidebooks of Russian literature. In 1775 he joined Yelagin's Astraea Lodge, who had become the head of Russian Freemasonry in February 1772, secured British authorization of the first Russian Grand Lodge and became its "provincial Grand Master." He had to join battle with the Templar system of Hund, which he unceremoniously called "dog's" (translating literally the name of its founder).

But the nobility had a liking for pompous rites of knighthood that riled Yelagin so much. The "Strict Observance Chapter" of knighthood established in St Petersburg in 1765 spawned numerous lodges in the capital itself and also in Moscow and other Russian cities. The exclusive Osiris Lodge for persons of princely birth was founded in Moscow in 1776.

Russian Freemasonry grew quite aristocratic in spite of Yelagin's resistance. The mystic quests for the "higher degrees" and "the Rosicrucians' mysteries" had an appeal to Yelagin and Novikov, who had become quite close. Together with one Schwarz, a German teacher, they founded in Moscow "a very covert scientific lodge, Harmony, with a restricted membership in order to exercise in quietude."²⁰ Having parted ways with the British trend, Yelagin and Novikov thus embraced that same "dog's" (i.e., Hund's) system which they had once spurned. Schwarz was delegated to the Grand Master of the Strict Observance Order, Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, who extended his patronage to the Russian Masons. The 1782 Wilhelmsbad Convent declared Russia, represented by the Grand Master himself, "the 8th Strict Observance (Rite) province."

What worried Empress Catherine II was not merely the fact that her subjects, united in Masonic lodges with their disquieting mysticism, reported to a foreign superior. Novikov's drive for enlightenment and his criticism had stirred

²⁰ *Masonry: Its Past and Present*, p. 154.

up public thought—and there was more than enough “fuel” in Russia. Pugachev’s uprising (1773-1775) had shaken the country. The rebellious peasant leader swept through the Volga provinces, beating in battle many of Catherine’s governors and generals. Landlords’ estates were burned down, the age-old bastions of oppression were shaking and serfdom itself was teetering.

Although the uprising had been put down, it had strongly affected the public mood. Catherine II chanced to look through Radishchev’s book *A Journey from St Petersburg to Moscow*, a forceful indictment of the system whereby peasant serfs were arbitrarily bought, sold, and victimized by landlords, and corrupt government officials prospered. The book was dedicated to Alexander Kutuzov, a leading Mason delegated to Berlin to learn “the supreme mysteries” of Freemasonry. Although Radishchev himself did not share the Masonic doctrines—he found them too abstract and far-removed from the people’s needs—Catherine linked the appearance of this book, whose author was “more dangerous than Pugachev,” to the Masons’ secret activities. She was told that Novikov’s Moscow printshop was putting out books of a “dangerous” nature. Searches were made and it turned out that Novikov and his association were publishing educational (and also mystic) literature on a scale that would be considered large even by the present-day standard. Altogether 18,000 copies of books were seized and burned, while the aggregate print was close to 100,000!

Catherine II attributed the intensification of Masonic activities to the rise of radical sentiments in France, where a revolution had broke out. There was another aspect to the whole business that was especially worrying to the empress, who had been put on the throne by a conspiracy: the unloved heir apparent Paul, the son of Peter III, was the center of suspicious intrigues. The Jesuits, who were allowed by the empress to operate in Russia, and her own police reported that the Masons were “brainwashing” Paul. He had some books and letters brought to him from Berlin, and Novikov and architect Bazhenov were implicated in the whole business. It was rumored that they had involved Paul in Freemasonry. (There is information that he was indeed accepted into the society in 1778.) *The Freemason Magazine* even published in a 1784

issue the text of a hymn to Paul with the refrain: "Adorned with the crown, you will be our father!" The empress was not taken in by the unctuous reference to herself in the hymn, which called Paul "the Russian goddess' son"—she suspected a palace coup.

The news of the revolution in Paris was the last straw: the empress exiled Radishchev and ordered Novikov arrested.

Catherine II's special decree (1792) listed the charges made primarily against Novikov: "First, they gathered secret assemblies, and had in them temples, communion tables and alters of offerings; terrible oaths were taken there with cross kissing and the Gospel, oaths which bound both the deceivers and the deceived in eternal loyalty and obedience to the order of the golden and rosy cross so that they should not disclose the mysteries of the order to anyone, and should the government demand this, they would keep those mysteries through torture and execution... Second, contrary to the lawful rule sanctified by God, they dared subordinate themselves to the court of Brunswick, thus putting themselves under its patronage and pre-eminence... Third, they were in secret correspondence with the Prince of Hesse-Cassel and with the Prussian minister Söllner, using ciphers of their own invention, and that at a time when the Berlin court showed us its ill will in full measure... Fourth, they used various means ... to lure into their sect the person known from their papers.²¹ In that allurements ... Novikov himself admitted his guilt. Fifth, they published and printed books that were forbidden, corrupt and contrary to the Orthodox Christian law..." In a show of "mercy," the empress commuted the death sentence passed on Novikov to a 15-year imprisonment in the Schlisselburg fortress. The other Masonic leaders got off with a fright; some of them had to leave for their country estates or at least to refrain from their activities for a few years.

Catherine II died in 1796 and Paul, having succeeded her, released Novikov and even invited him to his court, but the publisher, shaken by his experience, chose to leave for his family estate outside Moscow. One of the reasons for his decision was uncertainty about what Paul might do: having been humiliated because of his association with the Masons, he

²¹That is, the heir apparent Paul.

could have laid part of the blame with the "brothers," especially in view of the mental instability and fits of uncontrollable ire that were characteristic of the new emperor. Some historians argue that Paul on the whole disapproved of Freemasonry. Was it really so? The emperor retained in his retinue some of his closer Masonic associates. There have survived his portraits against a status of Goddess Astraea: Paul is shown in the garb of the Grand Master of the Order of Malta, which he consented to head. The Russian Orthodox emperor was not averted by the fact that it was a Catholic Order and he took seriously his duty of protecting the Order against Napoleon, who had moved his forces against Malta. The "Templar" Masons, who had an allure for him, traced their origins back to the Order of Malta, and Paul considered his Grand Master's post to be essentially Masonic. These mixed notions are evident in his portraits mentioned above. It must have been the Masonic "visions", which linked the sources of the Masons' wisdom and strength to the East, that prompted Paul to order a foolhardy conquest of India. His death put an end to that venture: conspirators killed Paul in 1801 and put his son, Alexander I, on the throne.

The new emperor patronized the Masons, and the movement in turn became even more conservative and loyal. The courtier Zherebtsov, whose mother had had a part in the plot to assassinate Paul I, founded the United Friends Lodge in St Petersburg in 1802. The lodge used the French language (Zherebtsov himself was accepted into Freemasonry when he was the Russian consul in Paris) and counted among its members the emperor's brother Konstantin, the Duke of Würtemberg, Count Kostka Potocki, Count Osterman-Tolstoy, Count Naryshkin, Count Balashov, master of ceremonies at the court and a future minister of the Police, and Count Benkendorf, who eventually became chief of gendarmes. Such a composition did not quite agree with the lodge's avowed goals of "erasing the differences of race, estate, faith or persuasion between people ... and uniting all humanity with ties of love and knowledge." Some time later the lodge was joined by Ignaz Fessler, a well-known Mason of Hungarian extraction and the founder of a rite named after him. He had been invited to Russia by the statesman Speransky, himself a Mason, to teach Hebrew in the St Petersburg theological academy.

The aristocratic lodge Neptune was opened in the Russian capital in 1803. The Emperor himself is believed to have been accepted into Freemasonry in that year (some time later he became a member of the Polish brotherhood as well). That explains why he consented in 1805 to the opening of a lodge named after him, "Alexander's Charity to the Crowned Pelican," consisting predominantly of Germans, on the basis of a former Swedish Rite lodge, "Pelican to Charity." In June 1809 the lodge "Elisabeth to Charity" was founded in honor of his wife.

Lodges were formed and reformed one after another. The followers of Novikov also contributed to the process: they met in Moscow in the "theoretical," i.e., of the highest degree, lodge of the "Dead Head." The journals *Sionsky vestnik* (Herald of Zion) and *Drug yunoshestva* (A Friend of Youth) began to be published. In 1810 the system of lodges was headed by the Grand Directorial Lodge of Vladimir to Order, the Russian equivalent of the Grand Orient, established with the emperor's sanction.

All that happened on the eve of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, on the eve of the war that was to become an historical landmark for Russia and to make a major impact on the development of her national self-awareness and social thought. The immense effort put by the Russian people into the defense of the country undoubtedly contributed to the growth of democratic ideas and sentiments against serfdom. The Masonic lodges were not immune to those developments: as the Russian troops pursued Napoleon's retreating forces across Europe, Russian Masons made contact with their counterparts who had survived the French bourgeois revolution and shared its ideas. Many Russian officers of noble birth were accepted into Masonry by Paris lodges. The seeds of free-thinking were cast into the soil of Russian nobility, which eventually grew into the movement called Decembrists after an armed uprising against the autocracy on St Petersburg's Senate Square on December 14, 1825.

That movement was not confined to Freemasonry alone. As the Decembrists' plan took on flesh, their leaders left the lodges of which they had been members. Yet many of them had embraced the ideas of Liberty, Equality, Fraternity along with the Masonic views and thus unwittingly taken after Rousseau and therefore after Marat, Robespierre and the Jacobins.

One of the Decembrists' outstanding leaders, Pavel Pestel, joined Freemasonry in 1812 with the beginning of Napoleonic invasion. He was accepted into the privileged United Friends Lodge, which functioned according to the French system. In 1816 he, a fifth degree Scottish Rite Mason, switched to the Three Virtues Lodge, where he met his future associates in the uprising, Trubetskoy, Volkonsky and Muravyov-Apostol. Some of the Decembrists were members of the United Slavs Lodge in Kiev, which accepted both Russians and Poles. Many of the Decembrists were Masons.

Pestel broke off with Masonry in 1817 but kept copies of all the Masonic papers, including "The Laws, Prerogatives and Privileges of the Scottish Master," which were found when he was arrested. Other Decembrist leaders began to leave the lodges in 1820. They knew that the lodges were riddled with informers of the tsarist police, which made any preparations for an uprising within the lodges very risky. Moreover, in 1822 Alexander I, fearing new trends that were emerging in the Masonic movement, cast off his mask of a liberal and banned the Masonic societies. By that time the Decembrists had already had their own secret political societies, which nevertheless used some of the Masonic symbols and signs and had some of the Masonic principles included into their statutes and plans.

The Decembrists, that cohort of fighters for the liberation of Russia from the autocracy and serfdom and for a republic and civil liberties, pursued far more radical and democratic goals than those they could have borrowed from the "Scottish" and other statutes. Their break with the lodges was explained not so much by the need for secrecy as by their awareness that Freemasonry was too narrow a movement for the achievement of the goals which they had set before themselves, namely, the awakening of the nation, of the people. The trappings of Masonry can hardly detract from the grandeur of the people who outran their age and lit the torch of freedom when there was yet too little oxygen for it to burn. The tsarist government brutally suppressed the movement: its leaders went to the gallows and others were exiled to a life of hardship in Siberia for long decades. But the impact of that open rebellion against despotism was exceptionally strong. And the more forcefully it made itself felt, the clearer it became that the postulates of Freema-

sonry were too narrow and that they were being imposed from outside with the self-seeking purpose of benefiting by directing Russian Masons to goals that were alien to them.

Quite a few Russian intellectuals who trustfully joined the "brotherhood" in search of "truths" and the meaning of life eventually realized that a number of actions of the Russian Masons were conditioned and that they depended on foreign organizations, and broke with the movement. The Russian "brothers" were told, for example, that their country was ignorant, that it could not have either a history or a future of its own, and that Russia could be "utilized" and "civilized" only if it was made dependent on the West. The numerous courtiers of foreign extraction who preached such cosmopolitan views infected some of the Russian noblemen with contempt for their own country.

The evolution of the world view of writer Nikolai Karamzin (1766-1826), an outstanding Russian enlightener, is quite characteristic in this respect. One of the leading Russian Masons, he was fascinated with the ideas of "a future fraternity of people," admired and translated into Russian Rousseau and Lessing and edited Novikov's *Children's Reader* magazine.

His *Letters of a Russian Traveller* (and he made his travels on instructions from the Russian Masons) extol the idea of "universality" and reject national characteristics and values, which was in accord with what foreign Masons said. ("Everything national is dwarfed by what is commonly human," he stated. "To be humans, not Slavs — that is the main thing.") But his conversations with Masonic luminaries, who looked down their noses at the Russian traveller and were totally indifferent to the realities and culture of his country, disillusioned him. He finished his *Letters* as follows: "My shore! My homeland! I bless you. I am back in Russia! I stop and ask questions of everyone solely to speak Russian and hear Russian people speak."²²

Once convinced by Masons that Russia had no history of its own, in 1804 Karamzin set out to write a multi-volume History of the Russian State; the great Pushkin, fascinated by Karamzin's work, observed: "Karamzin seems to have found ancient Russia just as Columbus found America." Karamzin broke off with Masonry.

²²N.M. Karamzin, *Letters of a Russian Traveller*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1980, p. 528 (in Russian).

Pushkin (1799-1837) himself went through a similar experience. The poet joined the Ovidius-2 Lodge in May 1821, when in exile. The lodge was headed by a future Decembrist, Orlov. Pushkin became so close with the Decembrists as, according to some evidence, wishing to join their uprising. When the leaders of the uprising had been executed, he drew on manuscript pages their profiles and their bodies on the gallows and wrote down in cipher verses which left no doubt that he himself could have been one of them.

It was the ideas of freedom and fraternity that drew him to the Masons. But when still in Kishinev, in the Ovidius-2 Lodge, he came across foreign (French) "brothers" who had nothing but contempt for everything Russian. Pushkin challenged one of them to a duel and, being refused, sent the culprit a sharply worded letter.

Pushkin eventually stopped visiting the English Club, the meeting place of the St Petersburg Masons, as his friends recalled later.²³

It was, perhaps, the great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) who expressed most forcefully the ambiguous attitude of the Russian intelligentsia to Freemasonry. The writer himself took a considerable interest in the doctrines of the "brotherhood," especially in the theory of the improvement of the personality and in the Masons' polemics with religious dogmas. His *War and Peace* supplies an historically accurate account of the problems of Russian Freemasonry on the eve and

²³Here is what Pushkin's friend Sobolevsky said: "I once told Pushkin I was surprised that he had drifted away from Freemasonry, into which he had been accepted, and that he did not belong to any other secret society. 'It is because of the white head prediction,' Pushkin replied [a fortune-teller had predicted that the poet's death would be caused by a "white head"]. 'Don't you know that all the charitable and humanitarian secret societies, even Freemasonry itself, were given by Adam Weishaupt a direction that is hostile to the present order of things? How could I have joined them?'" [meaning that the German "Weishaupt" translates into English as "white head"]. In 1837 Pushkin was killed in a duel by the Frenchman D'Anthes. The harassment of Pushkin by his enemies in St Petersburg, which led to the tragic end, had had a "Masonic connection:" a most insulting letter mailed to the poet was drawn up as a masonic document and the envelope bore the seal with Masonic symbols. The foreigners, who held sway in the lodge, were jealous of the esteem in which the people held Pushkin, of his being a Russian poet of genius. The police gendarme chief, Count Benkendorf, responsible for the surveillance of Pushkin, and the senior police officer Dubbelt, who spied after the poet, were Masons. Pushkin was to them not just a dangerous libertarian but also a man whose views of history and of the role of Russia and its people they hated.

at the time of Napoleon's invasion. It was no chance that Pierre Bezukhov, a restless soul who had joined Freemasonry abroad and who kept searching for the meaning of life, became the chief character of the novel. Pierre recollects, for instance, the instructions he received on a visit abroad that "it is not enough to guard our mysteries in the quietude of the lodge" and that "it was necessary to institute a universally dominant mode of government that would be projected over the whole world," "to assume responsibility for the upbringing of youth" and to unite people "bound to one another by the unity of their goal, people of power and strength;" those instructions were clearly of a political nature. Some of Pierre's reflections are also symptomatic: "Should revolutions be fostered, should everything be overturned, should force be driven away by force?... No, that is very far from our intentions. Any coercive reform is reprehensible..."²⁴

Tolstoy criticized the vacuity of Masonry: "A large number of people" who were members did not see in it "anything but an outward form and rites." They "counted among them also a large number of brothers ... who did not believe in anything or wish anything but who had joined Masonry merely to become friends with young and rich brothers, strong with their connections and noble birth..."²⁵ The following extract from the novel seems to be a reflection of the author's own disillusionment with the Masonic doctrines: "Pierre ... began to feel after a year passed that the ground of Masonry he was standing upon was slipping from under his feet the faster the firmer a purchase he tried to gain on it. He felt at the same time that, the deeper the ground he was standing on was sinking, the more unwillingly he was tied to it. When he had started with Masonry, he had had the sense of one who trustfully takes a step onto the level surface of a marsh. Having done so, he sank down. To make quite certain of standing on firm ground, he took another step with his other foot, and sank down even deeper, got stuck and now, against his will, was wandering knee-deep in the marsh."²⁶

Something like that happened to the best men among the Masons, to real heroes. In the 1870s the heroism of Garibaldi's "thousand volunteers" and the ardent loyalty of another mem-

²⁴ Leo Tolstoy, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, Moscow, 1974, p. 178 (in Russian).

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

ber of the "brotherhood," Giuseppe Mazzini, to the ideas of the republic helped break the age-old resistance of external forces and the papacy and unite Italy as a nation. The Masons helped finance the Carbonari, Mazzini's "Young Italy," but as early as 1820 the Triangular Lodge was formed in Turin, which was joined by Emperor Victor Emmanuel II, the king of the Savoy dynasty, and by his prime minister, Count of Cavour. Garibaldi, who throughout his life had fought against injustice and foreign domination, had to reconcile himself to monarchist Italy, and to say "I obey." A compromise that flew in the teeth of historical logic was imposed on Italy; its development was held back by the interests of aristocrats and landowners, which opened a gulf between the industrial North of the country and its southern provinces.

Garibaldi himself was offered by way of "consolation" to become head of Italian Freemasonry—but only for a short while, after which he was honorably retired. The triumphant bourgeoisie and the aristocrats who had struck a bargain with it had no longer any need for heroes or men of genius. What they needed was money, banks and profit. Garibaldi was succeeded on the center stage by the true masters of Freemasonry, by those who had watched from behind the scenes how people honestly dedicated to the slogans of Masonry had split their blood and sacrificed their lives. Adriano Lemmi, a banker from Livorno (Leghorn), where an Israelite community had established one of Italy's earliest lodges, became the Grand Master of Italian Freemasonry. It was he who established the secret Propaganda-2 Lodge more than a century ago and it was during his tenure that the so-called golden twenty years began with the Masonic symbiosis of bourgeois, bankers and autocrats freely developing and building up its influence against the background of incessant financial scandals and swindles.

It was the end of the age of glory, the "heroic period." Heroic deeds gave way to business as usual. The ideals of "eternal reason" materialized as the capitalist's way of thinking, while the revolutionary motto of fraternity, as Frederick Engels stressed, "was realized in the chicanery and rivalries of the battle of competition."²⁷

²⁷ Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 245.

A warning is in order here: the remark about the end of the "heroic period" does not apply to the outstanding personalities of that time. Many of them were children of their historical epoch. Masonry can by no means be credited with their dedication, heroism, gifts and genius. Garibaldi and Bolivar, Mazzini and Robespierre, Mozart and Beethoven, Byron, Pushkin and the Decembrists could be quite active in Masonic societies, but we cannot put the equation mark between them and such "brothers" as Lemmi or Gelli. That would be as unnatural and humiliating as Garibaldi's "I obey." What they created and gave to humanity is too large for the "chapters," "lodges" and "royal archs," for the standardized symbolism of Masonic myths—it is intended for the human race as a whole. That is why the peoples cherish those names: their deeds and accomplishments are addressed to everyone, are broadly democratic and full of trust in common sense. Those men did not draw their inspiration from the caste interests of the "chosen few." They lived in the midst of people, expressed their innermost aspirations and represented the best forces of their time. It is not to Masonry that they owe their glory; conversely, Masonry is trying to live off the glow of the nobleness and merits of those people, who spurned deceit, double standards and greed, those innate vices of the "brotherhood" which came into the open so forcefully after the "Grand Masters" had commandeered the front cars in the train of bourgeois rule.

From "Exclusiveness" to the "Superman"

Riding the tide of history, the Masons got more than once caught in the froth of restorations, autocratic and clerical counterattacks. Yet they never went under altogether but kept securing more and more comfortable positions and occupying the commanding heights in the "promised land" of bourgeois society.

In France, where political storms were more frequent than in other West European countries, the Masons often had to switch camps. Kaleidoscopic events kept them on their toes and made them promptly change their doctrines and slogans. Before the abolition of autocracy, future kings, Louis XVIII (Count of Provence) and Charles X (Count of Anjou), themselves were Masons. But when the Thermidor backlash reversed the revolutionary upheaval, the Masons switched from Jacobinism to Bonapartism. Having regained the throne, the Bourbons kept peace with the Masons. Although persecuting the republicans, many of them members of the Masonic movement, Louis Thiers, who held various cabinet offices under Louis Philippe (1830-1848), nevertheless ordered the prefects not to investigate the lodges. And when Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, backed by the military, carried out a coup d'état on December 2, 1851, the Grand Orient offered the post of the Grand Master to Lucien Bonaparte, the future emperor's cousin, while in 1862 Napoleon III himself granted that post to Marshal Magnan.

While the left wing of Freemasonry supported the Paris Commune at its birth (1871), other "brothers" did what they could to help strangle and crush the workers' dictatorship. Most of the French politicians who rose to positions of power in the Third Republic, among them Presidents Paul Doumer and Gaston Doumergue, Prime Ministers Léon Gambetta, Justin Com-

bes and Jules Ferry, were members of the "brotherhood." The total membership of the society kept growing as well, from 20,000 in 1889 to 32,000 in 1908 and 60,000 in 1936. Having gained control of the upper echelons of the Republican Party, Freemasonry took hold of the Radical Socialist Party, which was established by Brisson and Bourgeois and chaired by Mesureur, all of them Masons. At the beginning of this century more than 40 percent of the party membership belonged to the "brotherhood." Masons figured prominently also in the Socialist Party, established in 1905. "Freemasons occupied central places in the organs and associations which represented ... the ideology of the regime. They were at the head of many newspapers in Paris and the provinces, were the inspiration of sections of the Human Rights League, which is viewed by many as a simple appendage of Freemasonry, and largely contributed to the success of the Education League, born in 1865..."¹

The movement grew even more rapidly in its official birthplace, Britain, where it enjoyed the patronage of the royal family. The British bourgeoisie, moreover, considered Freemasonry an efficient means of increasing its own influence and securing commercial and business success. The chief breeding ground of Freemasonry, Stephen Knight notes in his book *The Brotherhood*, were the classes and professions that were not immediately involved in production, but could be found in especially large numbers in the key posts of British society, namely, among legal luminaries, top managers and bankers. For the latter, in particular, staying away from Freemasonry was altogether unthinkable: it was too great a risk not to be a member of closed Masonic "clubs," such privileged groupings as the Lions or Rotary societies.²

The membership of the "brotherhood" kept growing continuously in Britain. The number of lodges rather than their members ran into thousands: 1,000 in 1864, 2,000 in 1883 and 3,000 in 1903 (it was in that year that Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, the MP for Oldham, was initiated to a Masonic career). The number of the lodges rose to 4,000 after World War I, 5,000 in 1926, 6,000 in 1944 and 7,000 in 1950. Lodge No. 9003 was opened in Britain in 1981.³

¹ *L'Histoire*, No. 49, October 1982, pp. 34, 35.

² St. Knight, op. cit., pp. 35-36.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

Freemasonry came to play a noticeable role in Italy in the Risorgimento period, especially after Rome and the Papal State had been reunited with the whole country in 1870. Kings Victor Emmanuel II and Victor Emmanuel III were honorable Freemasons of the 30th degree. Prime Ministers Cavour and Crispi also held senior Masonic degrees along with a cohort of statesmen, senior military officers and bankers.

The "heroic" period in the European history of Masonry was everywhere followed by a very different stage. A characteristic observation was made in that context by the Italian historian Spinetti; according to him, the mutual assistance pact, which cemented Masonic organizations, "led in many cases to the formation of large 'caravans' in public administration, helped hush immense scandals, secure impunity for 'gentlemen' headed for the galleys and salvage more than one general from imminent retirement."⁴

Having asserted itself, the bourgeoisie (including the Freemasons) made it clear that profit was their ultimate goal in life, and that no means was too bad to squeeze out profit. Freemasonry borrowed from deism, the doctrine which recognized the primordial role of God in the origin of life but denied his active role in social life, the role of God for itself, and did what it could to attune its dogmas to the needs of the class living off the working people. It is to the intelligentsia serving the bourgeoisie that Freemasonry left illusions and high-flown words about ideals. Sumptuous clothing is needed, of course — by the bourgeoisie itself, to show itself off to society, and also to impose its specific goals on that society as if they were society's own, sanctified by the mysteries of the Great Architect.

The outstanding Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier amply showed in a number of his books, such as the novel *El siglo de las luces* (The Age of Light), the rapid degradation of the Masonic leaders of the French Caribbean colonies from high-sounding slogans to shameless money-grabbing, the seizure of markets and the conquest of the lands and riches of others. His characters, Masons, have no scruples as they throw overboard the ideas of universal equality for a policy of racial discrimination, or trade the theory of "equal opportunities" for piracy. Something like that took place on a far larger scale as well.

⁴ G. Spinetti, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

The triumphant bourgeoisie viewed the whole world as its happy hunting grounds. It launched colonial conquests and began to colonize the seized lands, carrying along Masonic symbols, aprons and hammers. It inspired the establishment of new lodges stronger to tie the colonies to the parent states and to fortify the bonds of colonial dependence with those of "spiritual" subordination. While in the US, Canada and some of the Latin American countries that plan did not come off to perfection — the "prey" proved too large for the hunter — Masonic lodges did a good job in Africa, Asia and Oceania. According to Knight, "the British took Masonry with the flag as they created their second empire, the one on which the sun never set."

There were "Black" lodges as well as "White" lodges and eventually mixed lodges were formed to consolidate the gains of conquests. "Associating the native upper and middle classes on a peculiar, profitable and clandestine basis with their white rulers," Knight wrote, they "did much to defuse resentment of imperial domination. Despite his color, any man rather better off than the mass of the people—who were not sought as members—could, by being a Freemason, feel that he belonged in however humble a way to the Establishment."⁵

In the parent states Masonic organizations helped form major political parties as centers of bourgeois power. According to the French magazine *Le Point*, for instance, five French presidents between 1879 and 1931 and 22 French prime ministers from 1875 to 1967 were Masons. Altogether 110 Masons were deputies to both chambers of the National Assembly in 1985; about a dozen were members of the last Socialist government. Britain is a good example as well: Arthur Greenwood, deputy leader of the Labour Party in 1935, and Prime Minister Clement Attlee (1945-1951) were Masons. The "brotherhood" meanwhile is an organization of all the bourgeoisie, while party affiliation comes second. Its paramount goal was to secure power to prevent social or class grievances from escalating to dangerous proportions. Wherever political parties were too slow to emerge for one reason or another, Freemasonry took it upon itself to perform their functions.

In 1935 the Italian Communists' leader, Palmiro Togliatti, noted that specific role of Masonry in his *Lectures on Fascism*:

⁵ St. Knight, op. cit., pp. 34-35.

“The Italian bourgeoisie had one united political organization, Masonry, which however was not a political party. Before the war (World War I.—L.Z.), Masonry was the single unitary organization of a political character. It played an outstanding role not only in the struggle for the unification of the Italian state or in the national liberation of Italy, but also in the political unification of different groups of the Italian bourgeoisie and in increasing the influence of Big Bourgeoisie on the petty and middle bourgeois strata.”⁶

That role of the common denominator of major bourgeois interests was characteristic of Masonry, which gradually came to represent the increasingly larger and influential associations of the bourgeoisie, such as national and, eventually, transnational monopolies, trusts and corporations.

But at the time of imperial conquests, the division of the world into colonies and spheres of influence and run-away competition on the world markets, Masonry still operated within individual capitalist states, identifying its interests with the goals of the national bourgeoisie of a specific country. Masonic contacts at the international level remained, of course, and even expanded; but as a consequence of scramble for markets and profits the rites practised in the leading Western countries and the specific features of the world movement of “builders of the Temple of Solomon” became a sort of weapon directed against foreign “brothers.” Lodges in English-speaking Africa, for instance, reported to London, while those in the French-speaking colonies took their orders from Paris. As the Germans moved into southern Africa, the Italians penetrated northern Africa, the Dutch conquered Indonesia, the US took hold of the Philippines and each of them tried to get a foothold in China, while the Spanish and the Portuguese were clinging to their influence in Latin America, Masonic lodges kept multiplying everywhere, and the symbiosis of the colonial administration and the local privileged classes, which professed ideas of preordained relations with and dependence on some parent state or another, took shape in some arcane way. In other words, Masonry, though acting covertly, was most active in the division of the world. With the colonies divided and companies and trusts entering a race for maximum profit, the Masons joined the front ranks of those who pressed

⁶ Palmiro Togliatti, *Lezioni sul fascismo*, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1976, p. 42.

for a redivision of the world and provoked conflicts which eventually led to the first world war in human history. For example, Masonic presence transpires readily when we analyze the specific interests and main springs behind the formation of antagonistic coalitions and alliances in Europe.

So far there have been few attempts to analyze that most shameful page of world history in terms of the responsibility of the occultist groups and the secret centers of bourgeois power which were preparing that conflict and sacking nations on one another. A glimpse behind the scenes will reveal the substantial role of Masonic leaders and politicians, members of the "brotherhood," in tragic international developments that led to World War I.

The event that served as the immediate cause of World War I, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austrian-Hungarian throne, and his wife in Sarajevo, is no exception in this respect. The assassination was the work of the secret organization "Unity or Death," set up by Yugoslav Mason Jovanović-Cupa in 1911. The killers, Princip and Čabrinović, were trained and fitted out by his friend, Vojislav Tankosić, another Mason, and controlled by Mitrović and Gaćinović, the leaders of the nationalist movement of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who professed Masonic views as well. There is evidence that French and Hungarian Masons also had an interest in the assassination. Yugoslav historians are aware of all that: relevant information is cited by Ivan Mužić in his book *Masonstvo u Hrvata* (Masons and Yugoslavia), published in Split in 1983.

All that holds true both for the Entente and for their antagonists, Germany, Italy and Austria-Hungary, the only difference being that Germany and Italy were late for the division of the colonies and were therefore especially aggressive. But the established colonial empires, too, were eager "to teach a lesson" to those who, propelled by their dynamic growth, were causing them more and more trouble on the world markets.

Germany and Italy deserve special attention also because at a time of a severe world crisis they became the birthplaces of the phenomenon which came to be known as Nazism in one and fascism in the other. That phenomenon demonstrated with terrifying clarity what fiendish evils can be unleashed against the human race by the bourgeoisie when the interests of capital are at stake: the extermination of whole nations, ideas of

dominance, violence, slavery and genocide came out of Pandora's box.

We have now come to contemporary history, to events and developments in the capitalist countries which were considered a model of bourgeois society and which undoubtedly made a substantial contribution to the history of world culture and philosophy, to the history of civilization. Perhaps, that is why their relapse into the Middle Ages, their return to the cult of brute strength and their elevation of some as the race of masters and denigration of others as that of slaves came to humankind as a savage blow, as something incomprehensible.

Nazism and fascism emerged against the very nature of progress and the meaning of civilization. Some historians even tend to think that their rise was poorly motivated. Perhaps, it was not in fact inevitable, and World War II could have been avoided and 50 million human lives saved. No Soviet family emerged unscathed from the war. Whole age groups of the male population, e.g., those born in 1922-1924, died in the battles with Nazism: 3 to 4 men out of every hundred survived. Altogether 20 million Soviet people, including children, women and the elderly, perished at the hands of Nazi killers. The survivors of that war remember those "supermen" with wolfish eyes, who unleashed that war and gave vent to their sadistic and violent instincts, as beasts disguised as humans. Fascism still continues to recruit supporters and followers and that is why it would be myopic to deal with it at the level of emotions and attribute its emergence to a temporary blindness of humankind or to some incomprehensible mental aberrations of entire nations.

That was not the case. Nazism and fascism had their fathers, grandfathers and uncles; there was an agency that produced, nurtured and unleashed it as a fighting force. It also had accomplices in the international community, those who could have stopped that monster at the very start and prevented whole continents from becoming drenched in blood and snowed under the ashes from concentration camps and burned down cities and villages.

Its willing and inadvertent progenitors and accomplices were those who stood at the political and economic helm in Germany and neighboring countries. They were the leading monopolies, which bankrolled Hitler and his party. They were those who turned tail before the Nazi fascist thugs, leaving them in full

control of the situation, those who gleefully watched Hitler's storm troops, Gestapo- and SS-men crush the working class movement and the Communists, those who took to heart Hitler's avowed goal of subjugating the "lower races," and destroying the Soviet Union.

The emergence of fascism was sped up by the crisis of the capitalist world, which had panicked over the victory of the socialist revolution in Russia. The Soviet Union set an appealing example by making the working people masters of the means of production and all the other riches of the country and by doing away with the class of capitalists and exploiters.

The bourgeoisie, scared out to its wits, decided to resort to extreme measures and to resolve the problem by force, by abolishing democracy and establishing a totalitarian society, fascism.

Now that the extraordinary circumstances in which fascist darkness prevailed are clear, we should take another step and analyze the root causes of the phenomenon and those historical processes which led to the triumph of obscurantism and to the rise of Hitler's juggernaut intended to conquer Europe and achieve world dominance. It is necessary to identify those "rules" which made the pestilence of Nazism possible. Studies of materials relevant to the present book indicate that one of the factors was Masonry, its philosophy and ideology, its methods of social manipulation, and its occult, secret ways of controlling politics.

The assertions that fascism and Hitler were hostile to Masonry are common knowledge; suffice it to mention the Führer's charges of "the Jewish-Masonic conspiracy of the Western plutocracies." Moreover, the Nazi's anti-Masonic sentiments look almost as axiomatic as their anti-Semitism. Incidentally, at the very dawn of Nazism Alfred Rosenberg, the future theoretician of racism, drew Hitler's attention to the "Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion," which appeared in Russia in 1903. That document, believed to have been produced as an act of provocation with the involvement of the tsarist police, formulated the idea of a worldwide "Jewish conspiracy."

Having overrun France in 1940, the Nazis began to register all the Frenchmen implicated in Freemasonry. Altogether 170,000 people had their names put on record. Pétain's Vichy government contributed to the campaign and declared the dis-

bandment of the movement in August 1940. Altogether 6,000 people were interrogated; around 1,000 were thrown into concentration camps, and 540 of them died or were executed.

Meanwhile, French historians stress, Hitler's policy toward the Masons was not mandatory extermination, as was the case with the Jews.⁷

The Paris headquarters of French Freemasonry was taken over by Sicherheitsdienst (SD), the Nazi counterintelligence service, which concerned itself also with the Masons. The Secret Societies Service in Vichy, which counted amongst its staff patently anti-Semitic right-wing nationalists, also kept an eye on all those suspected of involvement with Masonry.

That surveillance was not quite routine: the Nazis were looking for the "hidden treasures" of the Cathars (see above). Even when the war was nearing its end and rout stared them in the face, they were planning to send a special expedition aboard a submarine to the shores of southern France to find the Masonic treasures, which seemed to have spiritual as well as pecuniary value to the Nazi leaders. Having recreated those facts, which look amazing today, the French scholars ask: "What were they looking for? Did they really believe in the existence of the legendary fortunes of the Templars or in the hypothetical riches of the theosophical societies, the inheritors of the Cathars from Monségur, identified by some people with the fabulous castle of the Holy Grail?"⁸

Hitler and the Holy Grail of the ancient Knights Templars sung by von Eschenbach in the 12th century? Is there any parallel between the two? But some phenomena have very ancient roots, as has been shown above. The "mad baron" Ungern-Sternberg, who in the 1920s "laid claim" to Mongolia, traced his lineage also to the 12th century and the selfsame Templars. He believed that the Templars had been Buddhists and the swastika figured in the insignia of his troops as the cult symbol of Buddhism.

Very paradoxical associations sometimes surface in history and therefore in politics. It is worthwhile to try to sort out some of them; perhaps, it will become clearer then how the Nazis adopted the swastika, that ancient Buddhist sign of the "sun

⁷ See *L'Histoire*, No. 49, October 1982, p. 38.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

wheel," how the SS got its sinister skull and bones symbol and if there was any relationship between the Nazis and the phenomenon discussed in this book.

The question of Nazism's relations with the occult forces of Europe and Germany itself, with various Masonic societies has a long history. One of the war criminals tried in Nuremberg was SS Colonel Wolfram von Sievers. He was the head of the Nazis' occult bureau, Ahnenerbe, patronized by the SS chief Heinrich Himmler. Unheard-of atrocities and acts of sadism were perpetrated in the dungeons of that bureau: prisoners had their guts torn out of them and sinister rites were performed. SS men who were to join the bureau had to take oath in a special ceremony, similar to the "Ritual of the Stifling Air." Those handpicked brutes had to prove their mettle: a candidate, bare to the waist, had to stand his ground against fierce Alsatian dogs, to set off a hand grenade on his helmeted head, to skin a cat alive without injuring its eyes, and so on. Having passed those tests, he became an "initiate."

The names of Agarthi and Schamballah, the mystic centers of Buddhism, which told but little to journalists, were mentioned at the Nuremberg trial. The attitude to them was ironic rather than serious. Nazi atrocities seemed totally alien to such a tolerant and meditative religion as Buddhism, or to any faith at all for that matter. Von Sievers was executed and precious little was said publicly about the doings of Ahnenerbe. Meanwhile there were people in the West who could throw light on the relationship between the doctrines of the Aryan race and the plans for world pre-eminence, on the one hand, and some aspects of Masonic mysticism, on the other. It was a safer course to hold up Hitler's paranoia as reason for the grip of mediums, astrologers and clairvoyants on his headquarters and to write off the fostering of heathen beliefs and the cult of Woden (Odin) as something inconsequential, a product of mental imbalances of an isolated grouping.

But in reality the occult aspect of the rise of Nazism and the operation of its machinery were played down primarily out of the fear that Freemasonry's role in and responsibility for preparations for the rampage of Nazism would be exposed. Describing the confusion of some of the Masonic authorities in Britain and other Western countries in the face of the evidence given by Ahnenerbe thugs in Nuremberg, the Masonic author

Trevor Ravenscroft wrote: "Those who knew kept silent. The leaders of the Occult Lodges and Secret Societies linked with power politics in the Western hemisphere had nothing to gain by exposing the satanic nature of the Nazi Party."⁹

Nazism was a pathological aberration, of course, but it was not out of nowhere that it had sprung. There is a straight path leading from the postulates of "exclusiveness," the breeding grounds of various secret societies from the dawn of history to our day, to the "chosen races," the "superman," the "elite." Those ideas spawned, like germs of dangerous diseases, infected large numbers of people, provoked violent strife and devastated whole continents.

The seeds of such ideas were ripening also on the tree of Masonry, in its "satanic" branch that corresponded to Beelzebub as a part of Baal. Hitler's ascent (*The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* by Bertolt Brecht inadvertently comes to mind) is a good example in this respect: he would hardly have succeeded without the support given to him by the monopolies and militarist forces.

Nazism arose at a time of trial for the forces of German reaction and militarism. The defeat in World War I and the ferment under the influence of the 1917 Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia had given rise to socialist ideas and led to the formation and growth of the largest communist party in Western Europe and to the proclamation of a Soviet republic in Bavaria (eventually drowned in blood).

The ruling groupings had to achieve a turnaround in the mood of the mass of people, to manipulate the Germans' national pride, hurt by the treaty of Versailles, and to split the working class in order to pave the way to a counterrevolutionary dictatorship. There was a need for new slogans to reverse the conventional concepts of good and evil. Thickly larded with demagoguery, they would poison the mentality of the nation. There was a need for pythians of vengeance, messiahs of revanche and valkyries of new war. That was the only way to freshen up the moth-eaten furs of pan-Germanism, to give a shine to the boots of the military and to set the German hearts aglow with lust for vengeance. The monopolies and the aging stalwarts of pan-Germanism were looking hard for a messiah able to befuddle and hypnotize the German nation, to lead it back into

⁹ T. Ravenscroft, *The Spear of Destiny*, Samuel Weiser, INC, York Beach, Maine, 1982, p. 258.

the slaughter of war and to give another chance to German imperialism. Freemasonry came in handy in that search.

The son of the Austrian customs officer Schicklgruber seemed a suitable candidate. Adolf Hitler (it was under that name that he started his "career") volunteered for the German army and after its defeat, his unfulfilled ambitions eating him, became an agent of the Reichswehr counterintelligence service in Munich. He hounded Communists, who were seized and shot, and took part in the abortive "beer" putsch in Munich in 1923. Having served a short term in the Landsberg jail, Hitler, doing the bidding of his masters, began reorganizing a small party which called itself "Workers." He attracted the notice of the "big guns" of German militarism, primarily the military dictator Ludendorff himself, who had backed Hitler from the start, from the Munich putsch. It was thanks to Ludendorff that Hitler got himself a following of Germans who had fled from the Russian revolution, most of them Baltic Germans: Talberg, a former colonel in Kolchak's White Guard army and a scion of a family of Teutonic knights, Colonel Winberg, General von der Goltz, a former aide of Kaiser Wilhelm II, and also former White Guard generals Biskupsky, Avalov, Skoropadsky and Schabersky-Bork. All of them were members of the Baltikum Society (eventually renamed Consul), organized by von der Goltz, the secret sign of which was the swastika.

One of the abortive ventures of the Baltikum (Consul) Society was an attempt, made jointly with Kolchak's officers, to free and spirit away the arrested family of the Russian tsar. They took special interest in the tsarina, daughter of Grand Duke Ludwig IV von Hessen, who traced her lineage to Prince Charles Hesse-Cassel and Friedrich II of Prussia, the established ideologists of German Freemasonry. Prince Charles was deputy Grand Master of the Templars' Strict Observance Order. He adopted the name "Lion Reborn" and demanded from his order another "Drang nach Osten." Under the name of Melchizedek he belonged to the Order of "Initiated Brothers of Asia" and became its Grand Master in 1790. The "brothers" followed Buddhist dogmas (in their own interpretation) and believed in the reincarnation of souls, "rotation," symbolized by the selfsame swastika. At their gatherings members of the Order used to lie down on the floor to form the swastika with their bodies.

Small wonder that Alix, the Russian Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna, believed the swastika to be her own sacred symbol. She marked with it her secret correspondence with members of Baltikum (Consul), with her trusted courtiers, and also with the Buryat healer Badmayev, who attended to the heir apparent. She drew swastika signs also on the walls of the house outside Tobolsk where the arrested royal family was kept.

In the German lands, especially in Prussia, Freemasonry was from the start pointedly exclusive and aristocratic, and was headed predominantly by Prussian monarchs beginning with Friedrich II. They considered themselves spiritual heirs to the Teutonic Order and related Masonic doctrines to that Order's ambitions to conquer the East so as to return to the land of ancient Aria (Aryana), whence they had supposedly emerged. (That land presumably lay in what is now the territory of Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India.)

As the military and industrial potential of the German lands grew, the ideologists of pan-Germanism tried increasingly harder to unearth ever new myths, tales, legends and mystical doctrines to substantiate their claims to world dominance. "Teutonic" Masonry was in that sense the driving force of pan-Germanism and enjoyed the support of occult lodges from other countries.

The growth of pan-Germanism was closely linked to the general drift to the right in the Masonic movement as the ideas of the time of the French revolution were being shed. Reactionary undercurrents came up to the surface in the post-Napoleonic period, when Karl Marx and Frederick Engels published their *Communist Manifesto* (1848) and when the International Working Men's Association (International) came into being (1864). The suppression of the Paris Commune (1871) sounded the signal for the general mobilization of the reactionary forces. Germany, with its strong military and autocratic machinery of power, was viewed as a major force of counterrevolutionary intervention and the backbone of a Holy Alliance against progress.

Ideology arises from practical needs. In France Count Joseph Arthur Gobineau, an expert on Oriental religions and doctrines and a student of Persia, used elements of those doctrines to substantiate the division of nations into superior and inferior. Gobineau's *Essay on the Inequality of Human Races* laid the

foundation for the doctrine of racism and became all important to those who recognized it as a suitable means of not only protecting the interests of the national bourgeoisie but also of suppressing the international movement of the working people.

Gobineau's writings passed virtually unnoticed in France itself but found many admirers in Germany. For example, Professor Schemann, backed by some German monarchs, including the Duke of Baden, established a "Gobineau Society" in 1894. Gobineau's major works were reprinted and he was lauded as a "clairvoyant" who had understood better than anyone else the life and history of the human race.

The first step toward marrying the idea of "superior" and "inferior" races and that of the "mission" of the Aryans was taken by Elena Blavatsky, née Hahn-Rottenstern, a daughter of a German army officer who had settled in Russia. At 17 years of age she became the wife of the 60-year-old General Blavatsky, vice-governor of Yerevan, and for ten years travelled in the East. Then she declared herself a "clairvoyant" and began interpreting arbitrarily Oriental mysticism. In 1873 she moved to the US, became an American citizen and plunged herself heart and soul into occult Masonry that was so fashionable at the time. Together with Henry Olcott, a British colonel, she opened a theosophical society. Claiming direct contacts with the other world and cosmic "forces," Blavatsky wrote *The Secret Doctrine*, a three-volume "treatise" on the mystic predestination of the "Aryans," the "enlightened ones" who were to waken up the "God-people" dormant in the ice-fields of the Himalayas. It was they who supposedly were the progenitors of ancient Germans. The idea of a superior race, "supermen" with divine gifts, came into being.

According to that theory, the Aryans, originating in the Far North (meaning either the ancient Atlantis or Thule Island) and eventually moving to the area of the Himalayas, were closer than any other tribe to the extinct races of "God-people," "cosmic" nations who had supranatural qualities. They were presumably capable of shaping human races at will, and were thus predestined to lead the world and to subordinate the rest of mankind, not blessed with such gifts.

Having tightened its grip on the levers of power and amassed riches, the bourgeoisie readily shed its liberal ambitions and

youthful ideals. The second half of the 19th century was the age of decadence. The mundane atmosphere of lucre could not generate erstwhile enthusiasm or cement together the society in which deep rifts along class lines were opening wider and wider. The onset of new revolutions and the emergence of the proletariat on the scene of history sounded the death knell for the capitalist classes: hence depression, mysticism, all-absorbing interest in the Middle Ages and dreams about the "Golden Age." At the same time, however, a feverish search for new solutions was under way: panegyrics to democracy were giving way to concepts of "strong power," the "iron heel" as the cure-all for the crisis of capitalism and a means of fortifying its foundations.

The ideas of humanism, including those formalized in Christianity, were replaced with hopes for a "strong personality," a "superman." That break with old ideology was put across especially forcefully by Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) in his works *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, *Human, All Too Human* and *The Anti-christ*.

Nietzsche, who called himself the "first immoralist," dismissed the traditionally venerated "German intellect" as "indigestion." He hated and castigated Christian morality, ridiculed hypocrisy that prevailed in Western society and scorned the "mongrel ideas" of progress, democracy, the people and humanity. Having declared war on such sentiments as compassion, pity and humanism, he heralded the advent of a cold and ruthless world which would be ruled by "supermen" motivated solely by their selfishness, instincts and awareness of their superiority over others.

Speaking through Zarathustra, the iconoclast, Nietzsche reminded the Germans that that 6th century B.C. prophet, the frenzied creator of *Avesta*, lived and worked in legendary Aria, the birthplace of the Germans and other Aryan nations.

Nietzsche addressed disdainfully the smug philistines he hated so much, trying to revive in them the sense of greatness and superiority. He wanted to stir up the beast in them (and not without success). But it was those philistines, whose smugness Nietzsche castigated as the opposite of what the "superior specimens of the human race" stood for, who admired him the most.

What united them in that adoration was fear of progress, of socialism. Nietzsche feared most of all that the "oligarchs of

spirit" sung by him would shortly fall on hard times and that "the Paris Commune ... would perhaps seem a slight indigestion compared to what will happen."

Nietzsche believed that the world was ruled by the idea of "eternal rotation" and that the only purpose of history was the arrival of the "superman," who would "chain people together" by his will. "Supermen," according to Nietzsche, are the pinnacle of the biological evolution of the human race and God's place would be taken by a "semi-beast, semi-human with angel's wings on its head," "an evil, demonic being" whose power rested on "lies, violence and utterly shameless egoism."

The rule of those "demonic beings" over the mass of people was viewed by Nietzsche as the embodiment of the idea of—freedom. The rest of humanity was to him merely "a tool of the superrace." In his opinion, the rich man robbing the poor was "strong." "The rich is always right with regard to the poor." The recalcitrant "was in this case brushed aside as a pestiferous insect. He was too low and mean to justify continued sentiments of compunction in the ruler of the world."¹⁰

(The social aspect of this interpretation of "freedom" is clear. Following the same logic, Luther preached in his day that rebellious German peasants should be killed off like "mad dogs." He declared that "everyone can gain the right to eternal beatitude by slaughtering and strangling those brutes.")

Nietzsche branded all workers as "persons of faulty heredity" and held up the ruling class as the embodiment of racial purity. He recommended that its breed be further improved through pedigree marriages, eugenics, eventually embraced by the Nazis.

His ideal was the Aryan "blond beast" and his conviction was that the "German spirit" and "Great Germany" should be at the head of "the United States of Europe." Although he gave preference to the Nordic race and did not put the Aryan race and type above all the others, his works laid the foundation of the Nazi dogmas, which scorned the "Jewish-Syrian" race, along with the French and the Slavs. Prussia was viewed by Hegel as the embodiment of the absolute idea of the state, and that part of Germany, in which Friedrich II had beaten into people the simple rule of unquestionable obedience, became Nietzsche's

¹⁰Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human. A Book for Free Spirits*, Charles H. Kerr and Co., Chicago, 1915, pp. 107-108.

ideal as well: Prussia became the home of his "chosen people." Said he: "My starting point is the Prussian soldier." And the Prussian nobility was for him "a stronger and more definite type of new Germany."

United under Germany, Europe should be directed against Britain and Russia, Nietzsche believed. The idea of war, the glorification of war as the worthiest thing "supermen" can do, recur over and over again in his works. His Zarathustra says, for instance: "Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars — and the short peace more than the long... It is the good war which halloweth every cause. War and courage have done more great things than charity."¹¹

(Hitler and the Nazis claimed to be heirs to Nietzsche's theories and the führer himself even handed out to his followers photographs taken of him against the philosopher's bust.)

Nietzsche put out his best-known work, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, in 1883; Richard Wagner died in the same year, having just finished a series of epic compositions based on ancient German heroics. His latest production was the opera *Parsifal*.

Nietzsche and Wagner were for a long time close, but *Parsifal* was scorned by the philosopher as too sugary and Christ-loving for the outstanding talent of the composer, who sought to revive a sense of greatness of the German spirit in the country which was about to complete the unification process on the tide of Prussian victories over the French.

Wagner's themes, his Nibelungen and Siegfrieds, confident of their strength and striving for world dominance, his Gods, ceding their places to generations of "supermen," were welcome seeds on the soil thirsting for ideas of pan-Germanism. Germany was born of "iron and blood." It hankered for epic heroics, for tales of the warlike German tribes which had conquered the European provinces of the Roman empire.

Rising from long centuries of lethargy and division, the Germans turned to history in search of their roots and symbols and tried to adapt various myths of the heathen times, early Christianity and the age of European crusaders to their own ends. Moltkes and Krupps were dreaming of new crusades.

¹¹F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, The Modern Library, New York, s.a., pp. 62-63.

Wagner's longest opera, *Parsifal*, was devoted to the theme that had a long history, too, in the annals of European occult forces; it was the Holy Grail, that hard to define ultimate goal of all aspirations, the attainment of which offered untold beatitude, boundless wealth and invincible power. The myth of the Grail and the brotherhood of knights, the Order of the Templars, linked to it, was especially dear to the Freemasons, who traced their lineage to knighthood and the Middle Ages.

The legend of Parzival, the knight honored with joining the "chosen ones," the "brotherhood of the Grail," is revered by the Masons on a par with the myth of the "builders of the Temple of Solomon."

The mysterious Grail was the ultimate ambition of all knights. There are various interpretations of that phenomenon. Some authors believe that it is the cup into which the blood of crucified Christ was gathered and that the cup and the blood have magic powers. Von Eschenbach ascribes those powers in his poem *Parzival* to a stone, which can feed and clothe its owners, bring them untold riches, fulfill their wishes, prolong their youth and put off death. The Phoenix dies and is reborn in its magic fire.

In short, the myth of the Grail is a blend of both Christian and Oriental fables, the cult of the talisman and the alchemists' philosophical stone. Some compare it to the magic stone of the Biblical prophet Daniel, others to the fabulous stone of Celtic, Indian, Scandinavian and Old Russian myths and epics. Knights would make any sacrifice and lead a life of celibacy to gain possession of it. Exceptions are made for those destined to become kings and prolong their lineage: "to those of the brothers who are ordered in any country which has no monarch to crown themselves king by law," according to von Eschenbach. The myth bears the imprint also of British knightly legends, because many of its characters are associated with the court of King Arthur. The poem sings the strength and influence of the Templars. The wars waged by them had special meaning because they were forbidden to make war merely for the sake of glory. The Grail, which made it known who was allowed to join the brotherhood (the names of the "worthy ones" appeared and disappeared on the surface of the stone), was the focus of the special strength and might of the chosen ones, as it were, a model of vast secret power.

A mystic lance taken along with the Grail into the castle of King Anfortas as Parzival was received there, symbolized the exceptional powers of the Grail:

*A squire came quickly through the door
And a lance with iron point he bore
(A rite that caused them bitter woe)
Which dripped with blood in steady flow,
Then down the shaft into the hand;
The sleeve its further progress banned.
All those assembled wept and cried
Throughout the spacious hall and wide.
The folk of thirty nations
Had made less lamentations.*

The lance with blood constantly dripping from it, a symbol of an evil act and the need of redemption, had a special meaning in that case. It is believed to be the spear with which the Roman centurion Gaius Cassius Longinus pierced the breast of crucified Christ. The blood that flowed was caught into a chalice, the Grail.

Magic lances figure in legends which came down to us from various tribes and peoples. For example, a magic lance was the symbol of the Frankish Merovingian dynasty. The authors of the book *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, Baigent, Leigh and Lincoln, explain that the secret of the origin of the Merovingian dynasty is one of the inmost mysteries of the Masons, tracing their lineage to the Templar and Cathar Knights. The founders of the Order of the Templars, members of the Order of Sion, considered the Merovingians the direct descendants of Christ, himself a descendant of King David. One of the aims of the Order was to restore the Merovingians overthrown by the Carolingians on European thrones. (Most of the Carolingians, however, married women from the Merovingian family and thus were of the same blood as the Merovingians.) According to those legends, many members of European royal and aristocratic families can claim to be descendants of King David. References were made to documents which traced the lineage of Grand Masters of the Order of Sion, and also to conversations with the Order's present-day leaders, living in France.

At the time the opera *Parsifal* was composed Wagner and Nietzsche together made a pilgrimage to Vienna, where the lance of Longinus sung by von Eschenbach was on display in the Hofburg Palace along with other treasures of the House of Habsburg. Actually, it was the tip of the lance broken and fastened together with copper, silver and gold threads, which also held in the middle of the tip the nail with which Christ had supposedly been nailed to the cross.

At least a dozen other relics are claimed to be the "lance of Longinus," but the one in the Hofburg Palace is considered authentic.

According to a legend, the lance was made approximately five centuries before Christ. It was ordered by Judaic kings and made with secret rites as a symbol of the magic power of the blood of the "chosen people."

When Judea was conquered by the Romans the lance fell into their hands. It is believed to have played an historic role in Longinus' hands on Golgotha: the centurion's thrust spared Christ further suffering. In this way the lance of Longinus became a sacred object and was attributed the power to help its owner toward success in any enterprise, good or evil alike.

The Masonic author Trevor Ravenscroft (already mentioned above) lists in his book *The Spear of Destiny* the past owners of the lance, among them Emperor Constantine of Rome, who in 313 made Christianity equal to paganism, Emperor Justinian of Byzantium, Charles Martel, who defeated the Arabs at Poitiers in 732, Emperor Charlemagne, crowned the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire in 800, and seven members of the Hohenstaufen dynasty. Charlemagne (a Carolingian) made the lance his symbol and believed that that possession made him the ruler of Europe "by divine right." The lance passed from one German autocrat to another, from Otto, the Duke of Saxony, to Henry I the Fowler and Frederick Barbarossa. Von Eschenbach, the bard of the "spear of destiny," was also a German. Large branches of the "Brotherhood of the Grail," especially the Teutonic Order and the Baltic Order of Knights of the Sword, were German as well. Small wonder that Wagner chose *Parsifal* with a symbolic lance as the closing link of the "ring" of his operas.

The lance of Longinus had a mystic appeal for Nietzsche and Wagner. Some twenty years after their pilgrimage to Vienna to

see the "spear of destiny" with their own eyes, a young Austrian, visiting the Hofburg Palace, all but fell into a trance next to the lance. He began to draw pictures of it and sell them to tourists, read avidly everything he could find about the story of the lance, and about Parzival, perused Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, Goethe's *Faust* and Lessing's *Education of the Human Race*, devoured books about Oriental religions. The young man who spent his nights in doss-houses had a ready supply of such books from the bookseller Pretzsche, who was weaning him on mystic literature. Pretzsche himself went in for occultism and was close to Guido von List, the founder of Vienna's occult lodge. The lodge shocked the Viennese: the pan-Germanic mystics united in it practised sexual rites and replaced the conventional Masonic cross with the swastika.

Pretzsche himself, who had brought hallucinogenic drugs from a trip to Mexico, taught his charge (who was none other than Adolf Hitler) that by taking drugs and performing special rites one could develop "transcendental consciousness" and communicate with "universal flows of cosmic thought."

List's lodge preached pan-Germanic ideas larded with Wagnerianism and disseminated anti-Semitic literature. It was in that environment that Hitler and his world view were shaped. He became convinced of his own mystic predestination, which he said he had first sensed by the "spear of destiny," and the future führer began readying himself for the task.

The most ample evidence of the Vienna period of Hitler's life was supplied by Walter Stein, a mystic and Mason. Living in the Austrian capital, where he received his doctorate in philosophy, Stein grew close with Hitler through the shared interest in the "lance of Longinus," Parzival and other events and legends of olden times. Both viewed *Parzival* as a discourse on initiation into the "chosen ones." Hitler systematized the symbolism of degrees of initiation conveyed in *Parzival* as follows: first came the Raven, the perennial companion of Parzival (and, incidentally, of Frederick Barbarossa), which was the symbol of the "finger of destiny;" then followed the Peacock, the Swan, the Pelican and the Lion. Hitler gave the highest, sixth rung to the Eagle (Germany's imperial eagle!), which signified "universal destiny" and world dominance.

Stein and Hitler eventually parted ways. Doctor Stein, who wrote several papers on Parzival and the 9th century, came to

view Hitler as "the focus of the evil world primordial forces," an adept of satanism and today's Antichrist. Hitler gave an Aryan interpretation to the Masonic pattern of myths. In his view Christ, just as the bearer of the magic lance, Gaius Cassius Longinus, was basically "Aryan."

As for Hitler's interest in Parzival, he was especially fascinated by the idea of obtaining unprecedented powers, like those of the evil magician Klingsore. The Führer's ideals were Klingsore, and Emperor Tiberius of Rome (the suppressor of the Christians). That was how Stein explained Hitler's mentality to Trevor Ravenscroft, the author of *The Spear of Destiny*. Being a spokesman of "light" Masonry, as opposed to "dark," satanic trend, Stein had to flee from the Nazis. He found refuge in Britain and in World War II was Winston Churchill's personal adviser and an agent of the British secret service. He counselled the British Prime Minister on the area which he knew better than anyone, the mystic views of the Nazi bosses. After a long association with them in Masonic lodges, he is rumored to have been able to use the same astrological tables and horoscopes that the Nazis used and even predict some of their steps (such as replacements of senior commanders). Churchill valued Stein's services. In short, it can be said with certainty that the Nazi bonzas were "the other side" of Masonry, as it were: they had arisen from the same breeding ground, had been nurtured by the same dogmas — but put them entirely to the service of the insane idea of asserting Germany's world pre-eminence, of conquering other nations.

The contribution that was made to the Aryan-Teutonic trend of the movement by its non-German branches, including some Britons, also deserves mention. We have already seen how some mystics like Elena Blavatsky brought grist to the mill of the pan-Germanic forces with their racist doctrines. Now let us have a look at the "black magic" trend of the British "brotherhood." According to Ravenscroft, Britain owes the revival of mediaeval practice of "black" and other magic in the Victorian age to one Robert Wentworth Little. Pursuing his idea of forging a closer link between Freemasonry and magic, he established in 1865 the "Societas Rosicruciana," from which the Golden Dawn trend eventually branched off. It was not confined to Britain but had five "temples," including lodges in Paris and in Germany. (The fact in-

advertently comes to mind here that a Grand Master who was a member of the Hellfire Lodge stood at the sources of the Masonic brotherhood.)

In 1892 one Samuel Liddell Mathers announced to the Golden Dawn members that, using the Blavatsky "system," he had made contact with "the hierarchy of supermen," the "secret leaders" who manipulated the course of history at will. Those invisible rulers of the world were supposedly members of the "Great White Lodge of Supreme Adepts." In 1898 another British mystic, Crowley, got in touch with the "adepts." He had received basic training in Berlin's Ordo Templi Orientis Lodge, which practised sadism, sexual perversions and sacrifices of animals. In "seances" Crowley appealed to Antichrist, to Lucifer. Seeking self-improvement, he even travelled to "Klingsore's castle" in Sicily. In Germany he enthusiastically joined pan-Germanic mystics and then welcomed the Nazis and Hitler's rise to power. He was sympathetic toward the leader of the British fascists Mosley. Before his death from narcotics poisoning in 1947 he had said: "Before Hitler came, I was."

Another Briton, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, considered to be Nietzsche's heir, also did much to assist the forces of pan-Germanism. That son of a British admiral and nephew of Field Marshal Neville Chamberlain settled in Dresden in 1882. He had been raised by a Prussian governor and was sympathetic toward the Prussians' militarist spirit. He read Goethe and Fichte and then passed on to Nietzsche's and Wagner's works. In 1899 he published *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*, which was a blend of Nietzsche's ideas of "producing" a superior race with the Wagnerian glorification of the Aryan "master race." Chamberlain suggested that such a race be brought up on the idea of its universal historical predestination. He argued that the unification of the German people around Kaiser Wilhelm of Prussia, Otto von Bismarck and Helmuth von Moltke following the victory over the French in 1871 was the turning point in history. The factors that bred the hope to achieve the desired goal, a race of new "supermen," according to him, were the Prussian talent for organization, the economic potential of the Ruhr area and the "might of the German spirit." As Ravenscroft summarized his ideas, the German intellect was to lead the Aryan people to racial superiority and world pre-eminence.

Kaiser Wilhelm delighted in his book and received Chamberlain at court with the words, "It was God who sent your book to the German folk and you personally to me." Chamberlain for his part called Wilhelm "my emperor and God." He viewed Wilhelm's aides and generals as the elite of great heroes, members of a "new race." He became the spiritual father of the Prussian monarch, and grew so intimate with the emperor as to incur the jealousy of von Moltke himself, the glorified victor of the French. Von Moltke, himself a mystic and a Mason, took interest in the Grail epic and sought advice from the well-known occultist Steiner. Von Moltke claimed that Chamberlain was in trance and under the influence of "demons" when he wrote his works, although he himself admitted frequently "communicating with cosmos" in a state of prostration.

In 1889-1909 Chamberlain regularly went to Hofburg, stood for hours gazing at the lance of Longinus and "sensing the spirit of Time." He tried to talk Wilhelm into taking possession of the lance. The Kaiser attempted to persuade Franz Josef into sending the lance to Prussia, supposedly to be put on display, but the latter suspected something untoward and declined. Chamberlain also kept fuelling Wilhelm's paranoid dreams of world dominance. Germany's defeat in World War I did not affect his views, and at the very start of Hitler's rise Chamberlain "recognized" in him a representative of the "new race." Already half-paralyzed, Chamberlain met Hitler in 1923 and then wrote to him: "With one stroke you have transformed the state of my soul. That in the hour of her deepest need Germany gives birth to a Hitler proves her vitality."¹²

One more Briton contributed, though perhaps unwittingly, to the genesis of Nazism. He was the well-known writer Bulwer-Lytton, the author of the novel *The Last Days of Pompeii*. In the last years of his life he wrote the novel *The Coming Race*, a fantasy about the advent of "supermen." According to Ravenscroft, Bulwer-Lytton was a Freemason, a member of the British Rosicrucian Society. His works were eventually used by the Nazi Masonic Luminous Lodge for its studies into ways of "reviving" the magic properties of Aryan blood.

There is therefore every reason to say that influential representatives of British Freemasonry encouraged in one way

¹²T. Ravenscroft, op.cit., p. 147.

or another the rise of German militarism, including its plans for world dominance.

Meanwhile, there took shape in Germany itself a secret society which became the driving force behind the more atrocious acts of militarism perpetrated by German imperialism, the procreator of Hitler and his entourage. That society, Thule Gesellschaft, headquartered in Bavaria and its capital of Munich, was an anti-Semitic Masonic lodge that participated in the Germanenorden established in 1912. Its founder, who called himself Count Heinrich von Sebottendorf, was Rudolf Glauer, son of a Dresden engine driver. He went into commerce, settled in Turkey at the beginning of this century and made a fortune. It was there, too, that he began to study Oriental philosophy and meditation. He borrowed from Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* the idea of "Thule" or Atlantis, the land of the ancient Germans, and became the fervent supporter of the idea of creating a "super race." Having returned to Germany and acquired his noble title, he entered Bavaria's elite. (There was in Bavaria way back in the 18th century the "Mystics of Bavaria" Society headed by aristocratic family of Thurn und Taxis.)

"Thule" counted among its members aristocrats, senior Bavarian court and police officials, academics, industrialists and hoteliers. What bound them together was their animal fear of the "Reds," especially after the revolution in Bavaria, in which Thurn und Taxis had been executed. "Thule" mounted a savage campaign of terror, which was directed by Dietrich Eckart, who brutally killed the leader of the Bavarian republic, Kurt Eisner. Between 1919 and 1923 the society perpetrated at least 300 politically motivated assassinations. None of those crimes was resolved, and small wonder: "Thule" counted among its members Bavarian justice minister Franz Gürtner, Munich police president Pohner, his deputy Wilhelm Frick and other police and court officials.

(For their services to the Nazis Frick was eventually rewarded with the post of minister of the interior of the Third Reich and Gürtner with that of justice minister.)

"Thule" had a sound front, Institute of Geopolitics, which published the journal *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*. One of the Institute's leaders and chief theorists was professor and general Karl Haushofer, born in Bavaria in 1869. He was a career mili-

tary man, worked for many years for the German intelligence service in India and Japan, learned Sanskrit, the "holy" language of the higher castes, and translated Buddhist texts. In 1904 he travelled to Tibet, Mongolia, Xinjiang and Manchuria, and was converted into Buddhism at a monastery near Lhasa, where he was trained in clairvoyance. Even before World War I he advised the Kaiser to conclude an alliance with Japan, but Wilhelm was possessed with the "yellow peril" idea. He rose to the general's rank during World War I, at 45 received his doctorate and began to read a course of lectures in geopolitics at Munich University. He used the idea of Friedrich Ratzel, the founder of geopolitics, that the destiny of a nation was preconditioned by the land it lived in and by its lebensraum (living space) as the basis of his theory, spearheaded by the Teutonic slogan of "Drang nach Osten," that is, conquest of the Slavic lands.

He preached to the burghers, disillusioned by Germany's defeat, and to trustful students the need for revenge and for preparations for new battles. He said in his lectures: "Space is not only the vehicle of power; it is power... I intend to teach Political Geography as a weapon to reawaken Germany to fulfil its destined greatness. I shall re-educate the whole nation to awareness of the role of geography in history so that every young German shall cease to think parochially but think instead in terms of whole continents."¹³

Haushofer urged "young Germans" to make their way to Asia, the birthplace of the "Aryan race," and to conquer (on the way) Eastern Europe and Russia.

One of his most diligent disciples was Rudolf Hess, who shortly became involved in the activity of Thule's occult groups in which Haushofer and Dietrich Eckart were unchallenged authorities. Hess for his part introduced Haushofer to Hitler. Within the few months that Hess and Hitler spent in the Landsberg jail after the "beer putsch" the professor visited both more than once. Haushofer was pleased to see Hitler absorbing promptly and avidly his ideas of "lebensraum" and the "Aryan" race. The Nazi leader used the "lectures" read to him by Haushofer in jail as the basis of his *Mein Kampf*, which he began to write in Landsberg.

¹³T. Ravenscroft, op. cit., p. 226.

The Thule crowd, dreaming of "Great Germany," was looking for a tribune capable of inciting the mass of people and of speaking the language that would be understandable to the lower classes. That explains the interest the society took in Hitler, a gifted public speaker and a fierce chauvinist and demagogue. Experts in the performing arts were given the task of mellowing his vulgar gesticulation and teaching him to make meaningful pauses and deftly to manipulate crowds. Hitler frequented secret groups and seances of spiritism. At one of the seances von Moltke's widow, "communicating" with the spirit of her late husband, announced that the field marshal had told her the name of the future dictator of Germany: it was Hitler!

Mysticism and occultism, Masonry and Nazism walked hand in hand. When Hitler obeyed orders from his bosses in the counterintelligence service and joined the Arbeiterpartei (Workers' Party), he was followed by some 40 Thule members led by Dietrich Eckart. By way of putting finishing touches to the occult education of the future führer, Eckart fortified his belief in himself and his predestination. On his death bed in 1923 that expert on the Grail, translator of Ibsen, poet, historian, drug addict and sophisticated obscurantist told his men: "Follow Hitler! He will dance, but it is I who have called the tune. I have initiated him into the 'Secret Doctrine' ... and given him the means to communicate with the Powers."¹⁴

Ravenscroft quotes Eckart as telling the Thule members that he had personally received a kind of satanic annunciation that he was destined to prepare the vessel of Antichrist, the man inspired by Lucifer to "conquer the world and lead the Aryan race to glory."¹⁵

Hitler, Hess, Himmler, Goering, Goebbels and Heydrich had around them a large crowd of clairvoyants, mediums, astrologers and witches of both sexes. The Nazis had in their service the well-known Berlin "clairvoyant" Erik Hanussen, who published the occult newspaper *The Other World* with prophecies favoring Hitler and his crowd. On February 24, 1933, just before the Reichstag fire, he, feigning trance, held forth in the Berlin theater: "I see a crowd ... a large crowd in the streets... All the people acclaim a march past of our SS...

¹⁴Ibid., p. 91.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 92.

The night is torn asunder by fire... I see flames of joy... It is the flame of German liberation, the fire which devours the ancient servitudes... Now it has reached a large building ... a palace! The flames burst out of the windows ... spread out... The dome will cave in any moment..."

Hanussen must have been warned by the Nazis about the provocative act of arson they had prepared. Goebbels was jealous of Hanussen's influence on Hitler and began poking into "shadowy spots" in the life of the "SS clairvoyant." Hanussen knew too much about Nazism and its leaders, but the Nazis, too, learned something new about him: his real name was Harschel Steinschneider and he had been married in a Czechoslovak synagogue. The decision was taken to do away with the "magician" and he was killed.

The Nazis' relationship with Masonry was quite involved. There is information that way back in 1919 Hitler was initiated into Masonry by Reverend Bernard Stempfle, who subsequently style edited *Mein Kampf*.¹⁶

Yugoslav scholar Zoran Nenezić also mentions the fact in his book *Masons in Yugoslavia*: "It is commonly known that the formation of Hitler's anti-Semitic views was influenced by 'The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion.' It is not as widely known, however, that some of the German Freemasons strongly supported Hitler at the time when the German Workers' Party was merely a handful of 'insane followers of even more insane leaders.' Hitler's party was backed by Thule, Germany's strongest secret organization rooted in the Germanenorden, which had Masons in its branches all over the country."¹⁷

Nenezić mentions Henry Ford among other anti-Semitic Masons who financed Hitler from abroad; the American car-maker fed the Nazis hundreds of thousands of dollars to subsidize their anti-Semitic actions. Himself a Mason, Henry Ford at the same time was not a stranger to the lodges which were particularly close to Zionism. In 1894 he was granted the Master's degree by Palestine Lodge No. 357 and to his very death in 1947 was a member of Sion Lodge No. 1. Henry Ford, incidentally, considered the "Protocols" authentic and argued that their text showed too profound a knowledge of the secret

¹⁶ *Rzeczewistosc*, No. 11, June 2, 1985.

¹⁷ Zoran Nenezić, *Masoni u Jugoslaviji (1764-1980)*, Narodna knjiga, Beograd, 1984, p. 73.

springs of life to be mere deception. Commenting on Hitler's eventual ban on Masonic activities, Nenezić says: "At the same time some of the German Masons were in the top echelons of power in the 'Third Reich.' There were particularly many of them in Canaris's military counterintelligence service. Hitler made especially extensive use of Masonic channels in his political gamble with Britain and France."¹⁸

("Germany's economic infiltration of Yugoslavia also proceeded by the dependable routes of Masonic 'brotherly solidarity,'" Nenezić notes. "That was how countless Freemasons managed to save their necks when German troops had overrun European countries."¹⁹)

Having tightened his grip on power, Hitler was in no hurry to roll up Masonic structures. He was aware that many of the Masons were his allies. West German historian Neuberger says in his study *Masonry and National Socialism* that Hitler "never once took a stand of struggle against Masonry... Hitler's anti-Masonic stand was never so profound as his anti-Semitism was. He viewed the Masons merely as rivals." There was one more reason: "The old Prussian lodges were openly supportive of the rightist radicals."²⁰ (By the latter the author means Hitler's Nazis.)

Hitler had especially many Masonic allies in the militaristic circles, among the Prussian and other military, who found the Nazis to be their heirs. Both Kaisers, Wilhelm I and Wilhelm II, were the patrons of Prussian Masonry. The Hitler army revered the names of quite a few Masons, among them the Prussian Field Marshal Gebhard Leberecht von Blücher, Field Marshal August Neithardt von Gneisenau, Prussia's Chief-of-Staff Gerhard Johann David von Scharnhorst, and both Moltkes. Nazi warships carried their names and the Wehrmacht was brought up in the spirit of reverence for the Prussian military school and its Masonic patrons, Friedrich II and Friedrich III. The former's portrait never left the wall of Hitler's office.

That was why amidst all the hue and cry about a "Jewish-Masonic conspiracy" Hitler had tolerated the Masons for over two years after his rise to power before ordering the "voluntary"

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ H. Neuberger, *Freimaurerei und Nationalsozialismus*, Bauhütten Verlag, Hamburg, 1980, pp. 162, 166, 250.

self-dissolution of the Masonic lodges. The old Prussian lodges dissolved themselves in July 1935 and lodges with a special status, such as the Grand Lodge of Saxony in Dresden and the Grand Lodge of German Brotherly Chain, in August 1935. The prestigious Hamburg Lodge, the first lodge in Germany which counted among its members Friedrich II, Duke of Brunswick, Baron Stein, Kaiser Wilhelm I, the founder of the Reich, and his son Friedrich, was closed "according to the established procedure" and in the presence of "gentlemen from the Gestapo." Moreover, the newspaper *Hamburger Tageblatt* carried the texts of the dissolution protocol and the speech made by the lodge's Grand Master Richard Bröse.

The Nazis confiscated many of lodges' ritual objects, including skulls and bones, and mounted propaganda exhibitions to demonstrate the "terrible business" the lodges had been going about. Yet they left in peace to the last the friendlier lodges of the "Strict Observance" Templars and other centers with which they were closely associated: the thrust of their attack was directed at the Masons of the left and liberal trends. The scope of repression is illustrated by official figures released by the West German Masons.

Between 1933 and 1945, altogether 4,800 out of the 80,000 German Masons—6 percent—were repressed, and the list specifying acts of repression against them is worth reprinting:

1,750 died from natural causes;

62 were killed;

238 were exiled abroad;

133 disappeared without trace;

254 sustained loss of property;

377 lost jobs;

285 were compelled to change occupation;

53 were committed to concentration camps.²¹

The losses and suffering of the Masons are hardly comparable with those of active antifascists (according to the same source,

²¹ Jürgen Holtorf, *Die verschwiegene Bruderschaft*, Wilhelm Heyne Verlag, Munich, 1984, pp. 93-94. Holtorf wrote his *Silent Brotherhood* as a tour de force of investigative journalism. His real purpose, however, was to give a face-lift to the prestige of Freemasonry, damaged by the P-2 scandal in Italy and the exposures of Stephen Knight in Britain and other authors. Holtorf, one of the leaders of West German Freemasonry, does not disclose his rank in the Masonic hierarchy—which makes the figures cited by him all the more interesting.

of the Masons only "44 persons offered active resistance (to Nazism. — L.Z.)"!)

The Nazis, however, closely perused Masonic archives and libraries "to identify material of interest," as the Führer said in his order of March 1, 1942. That task was entrusted to a special headquarters under Alfred Rosenberg, Reichsminister of the occupied Eastern territories. The chief theorist of racism was critical of Masonry — but viewed it, according to Neuberger, as "the product of a noble movement, which by virtue of its vague ideological concepts has become a tool of intriguers." Neuberger also noted Rosenberg's intention "to pick up the values of Masonry and put them in the service of his own ideology."²²

It was Rosenberg who supplied Hitler with a copy of *The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion*. The interest displayed by Hitler, Rosenberg and other Nazi bonzas in Masonic *Protocols* and other documents was rather unusual. Rosenberg knew that the *Protocols* were either a falsehood or a compilation and that the Russian tsarist secret service had had a hand in their production in a bid to incite Jewish pogroms. But he is known to have studied that text with morbid interest. More likely than not, he was looking not only for justification of his anti-Semitic concepts but also for ideas to borrow. One can presume that that document, imputed to the Zionists' first congress in Basle in 1897, had some hidden parallels with the Nazis' own way of thinking and actions.

The style and content of the text of the *Protocols*, incidentally, are clearly something the police minds could not have produced. It could not have been a piece of crude forgery. Indeed, one of the source texts of the *Protocols* was eventually found! They "quoted" extensively from the book *Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu, or Machiavelli's Policy in the 19th Century by a Contemporary (Maurice Joly)*, published in Belgium in 1864 as a satire of the ambitions of Napoleon III. The book was banned in France.

Parallels between the texts are indisputable.

Here are extracts from the *Protocols*:

"We will sow such disgust for them (the authorities of the states of 'goys,' i.e., non-Jews. — L.Z.) that the peoples will

²²H. Neuberger, op. cit., pp. 94-95.

prefer peace in bondage to the rights of vaunted freedom... All the states are tormented; they are pleading for peace. But we will not let them have peace until they openly recognize our international supergovernment...

"We have befuddled and corrupted goyish youth...

"Our watchword is force and hypocrisy... Violence must be the principle and cunning and hypocrisy the rule for governments... That is why we should not stick at bribery, treachery and treason as long as they serve our goal.

"The difference between the goys and ourselves in mental abilities clearly bears the imprint of exclusiveness and humanness, as distinct from the goys' instinctive, animal intelligence. They see but do not foresee..."

And here is what Joly said in his book:

"By envy and hatred, by struggle and warfare, even by spreading hunger, destitution and plagues, we shall bring all peoples to such a pass that their only escape will lie in total submission to our domination.

"We shall stultify, seduce, ruin the youth. We shall not stick at bribery, treachery, treason, as long as they serve the realization of our plans. Our watchword is: Force and hypocrisy!

"In our arsenal we carry a boundless ambition, burning avidity, a ruthless thirst for revenge, relentless hatred. From us emanates the specter of fear, all-embracing terror."

But the point is not just similarities between extracts from Joly's book and the *Protocols* but the meaning of Joly's treatise. Is it satire? Or is it a cynical and arrogant manifesto? What was Joly himself and what was his motivation for writing the *Dialogue in Hell*?

Maurice Joly is known to have been a member of the Rosicrucians, the procreators of "satanic" lodges, including the Golden Dawn and other occult societies.

He could not have had anything to do with the 1897 Basle Congress: his *Dialogue* had been written and published thirty-three years earlier. Yet that fact does not rule out altogether Joly's connection with the Zionists, who had been active before the Basle Congress as well. Even before the publication of Joly's book, in 1843, there was established in the US a lodge of "Sons of the Covenant," B'nai Brith, which eventually spawned numerous affiliates in Europe (and in Palestine in 1860). By that time the chief ideologist of a state

of Israel in Palestine and an Austrian journalist, Theodor Herzl, had been quite active already.

Further comparison of Joly's book with other publications shows that there are many parallels not just with *The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion* but also with what Herzl, the founder of Zionism, wrote.

Here are some of them:

Joly: "My preferences have always lied with monarchism."

Herzl: "I am a staunch supporter of monarchic rule" (the statement is backed with arguments similar to those cited by Joly. — L.Z.).

Joly: "With the present state of world affairs, force will precede law."

Herzl: "With the present state of world affairs and very likely for quite some time to come, force will precede law."

Joly: "The common people are abysmally lowly and cannot have any adequate perception of events and phenomena."

Herzl: "The common people do not and cannot at all have any adequate idea of historical phenomena."

Herzl has been quoted here from his well-known work *The Jewish State*, published shortly before the Basle Congress in 1895.

Was Herzl's treatise, too, the handiwork of the tsarist police? Hardly likely... Three different birds seem to have flown out of the same nest. Or four, if we count a book by Alfred Rosenberg, the theoretician of the "chosen Aryan race," whose interest in the *Protocols* we have mentioned. Page after page of his *Twentieth Century Myth* coincides with the texts of Joly, Herzl and *The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion*. Here is a characteristic abstract:

"We are chosen, we are the only true men. Our minds give off the true power of the spirit; the intelligence of the rest of the world is merely instinctive and animal..."

"We shall paint the misdeeds of foreign Governments in the most garish colors and create such an ill-feeling toward them that the peoples would a thousand times rather bear a slavery which guarantees them peace and order than enjoy their much touted freedom."²³

What do these coincidences tell us?

²³T. Ravenscroft, op. cit., p. 110.

The theory of exclusiveness, the theory of "chosen" races and peoples and the theory of "supermen" have the same roots. They are part and parcel of the Masonic doctrines and could well be used by various trends of racism, including Zionism and Nazism.

Hitler made no secret of such borrowings from Freemasonry. According to the evidence of former gauleiter Rauschning, he believed that the movement had degenerated into "just a harmless union for the mutual protection of interests." "But there is one dangerous element, which I have copied from them," he added. "They have developed an esoteric doctrine, not merely formulated it, but imparted it through the medium of symbols and mysterious rites... That is to say without bothering their brains but by working directly on the imagination through symbols of a magic cult. All this is the dangerous element I have taken over." Hitler continued, "Don't you see that our Party must be of this character. An Order that is what it has to be. An Order, the hierarchical Order of a Secular Priesthood."²⁴

To sum, Hitler borrowed from Masonry the form of organization along with elements of the cult and world outlook: Nazism was to be organized as a secret society, as an order. So didn't the Nazis, having risen to power, view Freemasonry as a rival organization to be removed?

As for the Nazi trend that branched off traditional Masonry, far from being dissolved, it was being strengthened continuously under the watchful eye of the "Third Reich" bonzas. Top figures from Thule and the Berlin Order, headed by the sadist and pervert Crowley, were recruited into the SS occult bureau Ahnenerbe. They were joined by a special team of geopolitician Haushofer, who were trying to evolve a mutation of the Aryan race capable of emanating from their bodies "immense bursts of energy." The team was basically Masonic and went under the name Luminous Lodge. They drew their inspiration from Bulwer-Lytton's *The Coming Race*; during the war they "experimented" with bone marrow and cut-off heads of Soviet army officers. Eventually the team assumed the name "Vril" (the word used by Indian mystics for hypothetical energy sources in human organism).

²⁴T. Ravenscroft, op. cit., p. 175.

Vril members sat for hours on end over plant seeds and apples cut into pieces "to soak up" their energy. Yet the Nazis did not think their own sorcerers to be enough and went for help to mediaeval societies of Oriental countries. Haushofer invited the assistance of Japan's Green Dragon Society, of which he himself had been a member when he had lived there, and Tibetan Buddhist sects, which he thought worshiped the evil spirits, were mobilized. The professor mounted several expeditions into the Tibetan mountains in search of adepts of the Agarthi sect, which worshiped the evil forces, and it was that name that later figured at the Nuremberg trial. Another Tibetan sect, Schamballah, refused to cooperate with the Nazis, while Agarthi lamas were rumored to have come to Berlin to mobilize "cosmic evil forces" to give Hitler a hand in his war against the Soviet Union.

Vril and Agarthi, known in the SS as "the Society of Green Men," were incorporated into Ahnenerbe as well, and together formed the Black Order of the SS; its symbol was "Totenkopf" (dead head). The Order's top figures and Gestapo leaders were obliged to attend classes in meditation, transcendentalism and magic.

The research arm of the Order was headed by Haushofer's close friend, Professor Wirth, an expert in Oriental philosophy who taught Sanskrit at Munich University. Wirth and his assistants were trying, in particular, to pinpoint the geographic location of the Indo-German race and to work out its broadest possible characteristics. (The Nazis, it should be recalled, were "predestined" to return to their primordial homeland and thence to rule the world!) The use of science in the service of bestial barbarity was just another aspect of the degradation of those who had engineered the rise of Hitler and his blood-stained crowd!

But the traditional Masonic channels were not forgotten either: even at the height of World War II the links of "brotherhood" between the leading German mystics, including Haushofer, and Britain, "the mother of all lodges," were not severed. Having sold to Hitler the idea which Chamberlain had failed to impress on Wilhelm II — the idea of an alliance with Japan (and Italy), Haushofer at the same time believed that the bridges of special relations with certain Britons should not be burned, and that merely a "strange war," for show rather than for real, should be fought with Britain and France. Just before the Nazi juggler-

naut was unleashed against the Soviet Union, Haushofer's favorite disciple, Rudolf Hess, took what seemed to be an extravagant step: on May 10, 1941, he flew his personal plane to Britain. Hess landed next to Lord Hamilton's estate in the south of Scotland and tried to pass himself off as "Captain Horn" — but was identified and arrested by the British.

Hess considered himself the potential leader, second only to Hitler, of Germany and eventually of the whole Western world. He shared the view of his teacher, Haushofer, that the world could be divided between the Germans and the Anglo-Saxons. He could hardly have attempted his flight without the knowledge of another bulwark of the regime, Himmler; the two, moreover, were closely associated through their joint occult goings-on in Ahnenerbe. The Nazi press, too, hinted at those activities.

On April 27, 1941, a fortnight before Hess's flight to Scotland, the Nazis' *National Zeitung* said: "Rudolf Hess's activities are so diverse that they cannot be described in a few words, and some of his duties are such that they cannot be made public."

Hitler's (and Haushofer's) personal astrologer, Schultke-Stratthaus, prompted by the professor, told Hess that, according to his horoscopes, Germany could lose the war only if Britain entered it — and that eventuality could not be ruled out in view of Hitler's plans to attack the USSR. Hess was to convince the British not to react too strongly to the opening of the Eastern Front. The mission of one of Hitler's closest lieutenants was to demonstrate to the British that the continuation of Munich, i.e., connivance at Hitler's aggression, was still in their own interest. It was decided that Masonic channels offered the best means of making contact. On Haushofer's instructions, historian Carl Burckhardt conferred with Lord Hamilton, who encouraged the Nazis' intention "to continue talks." Hess himself was acquainted with Hamilton: they had met at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin.

Everything possible was done at the Nuremberg trial to prevent contacts between the British Masons and the Nazis from becoming public knowledge. Hess himself pleaded insanity, outlived many of his backers as he served a life term in the Spandau prison, and committed suicide in 1987.

A few words about Nazi Germany's "historical" ally, Italy, where fascism had taken over a decade earlier than in Germany, are in order. We have already mentioned Mussolini's contacts

with the rightist Piazza of Jesus trend of Italian Freemasonry, and the fact that the Duce was promoted to the "honorable" 30th degree, once the prerogative of the Savoy monarchs.

As for the liberal trend, Justinian Palace, by banning it Mussolini, in addition to other things, avenged the Justinians' insulting refusal to his application as a young man for membership of the Andrea Rinoncini Lodge in Lugo di Romagna.

According to evidence supplied by Italian Masons, 45 top bosses of the Italian fascist hierarchy, among them Italo Balbo, Dino Grandi, Giuseppe Bottai and Mussolini's son-in-law Galeazzo Ciano, were members of Masonic lodges, although the movement had been banned officially in 1925.

Just as the Nazis, they had an esoteric core, which manipulated eastern myths to hold up the Italians as a "chosen" and "illuminated" people and "children of the Sun." Baron Giulio Evola was the chief theorist of Roman esoterics and Mussolini's unofficial adviser on racism. Evola published quite a few books with telltale headings, such as *The Myth of Blood*, *Theory of the Absolute Personality*, *Heathen Imperialism* and *Doctrine of Race*. Some of the books were traditionally Masonic, such as *The Hermetic Tradition in Its Symbols, Doctrine and the Royal Art* or *An Introduction to Magic as the Science of Your Ego*. Like his German counterparts, he was fascinated with the Grail and interpreted Buddhism in an "Aryan" way; he dealt with those issues in his books *The Mystery of the Grail* and *The Doctrine of Awakening*. His interpretation of the Buddhist doctrine, just like the Nazis', was in fact a far cry from the real thing: Buddha's teachings were presented as a mere guide for training the spirit and discipline and a means of becoming one of the "worthy," those who can be elevated to the status of the "awakened ones."

Evola mentions the hypothesis, familiar from Blavatsky's *Secret Doctrine*, of the Aryans' northern origin, scorns the common people, who "cannot rise to anything noble," and glorifies "manly energy," which makes it possible to include the Aryans in "the master clan." Evola by far outlived both Hitler and Mussolini and in the 1970s, the heyday of terror in Italy, was the idol of neofascist and esoteric terrorists who represented the Masonic trend in the Italian neofascist movement. The names of some of them figured in Gelli's lists of the P-2 lodge.

Those are some of the facts as regards Freemasonry's relations with Nazism and fascism. The "brotherhood" and its

doctrines merely *seem* to be the opposite of totalitarian and racist theories, while in reality there is a strong link going from "exclusiveness" to the "superman" and the "master race;" what they have in common is worship of gold, fear of the common people and anticommunism.

Just a few words about the fate of "the Devil's servitors," the lamas summoned to Germany to unleash "cosmic forces" against the Soviets. As the "master race" suffered one defeat after another — at Moscow and Stalingrad, at Kursk and Belgorod — the Nazis grew more and more vindictive toward the "Agartha green people." Like savages lashing their idols when those fail to grant prayers, the Nazis no longer restrained their wilfulness and contempt for "the envoys of the dark forces" and starved them. When the Soviet Army was about to enter Berlin, Hitler's mystic allies took their own lives.

Did they realize what cause they
were trying to
advance?

The Moloch of Militarism

The Hitler regime was in its death throes. The Führer, his deep depression punctuated by frenzied outbursts of hysteria, holed up in the underground bunker under the Imperial Chancery building in Berlin with Goebbels, one of the few Nazi bonzas who remained loyal to Hitler to the last, holding his hand.

One night Goebbels reminded Hitler of the "miracle" which had helped Friedrich II avoid the bitter consequences of defeat and keep his crown.¹ The Nazi propaganda minister had found parallels between the horoscopes of Friedrich II and Hitler. The Führer was unnaturally buoyed up for some time and kept repeating, "Friedrich's destiny... Friedrich's destiny... A miracle... A miracle..." The news of the death of US President Roosevelt gave the Nazis the hope of possible frictions between the members of the Anti-Hitler Coalition.

But the Soviet Army was fighting its way into Berlin. The Soviet Union's Western allies, which had waited till summer 1944 to see which way the tide would turn, were now trying to make up lost ground in the fear that the USSR would singlehandedly complete the rout of the "Reich" and liberate Europe.

Mussolini had already been executed by Italian partisans and the Führer was thinking of suicide while his lieutenants kept fussing over the lance of Longinus and relics of German emperors. Berlin's emissaries went on hiding and rehidng them in Nuremberg, where special underground shelters had been built for the mystic talisman. All the operations were top secret and compartmentalized so that no one of the men involved knew what the others were doing and who was to hide what. The lance of Longinus looked unprepossessing and was

¹ In 1761, following the death of Empress Elizabeth of Russia and the succession of Peter III (1728-1762), Russia made peace with Friedrich II of Prussia (1712-1786), which effectively nullified the results of the Russian forces' victories in the Seven Years' War.

left lying conspicuously while the more plush objects from the Hofburg museum, sacked by the Nazis, were packed into crates to be shipped into caches. It must have been an eerie picture: with the Nazi empire crumbling all around them, with street fighting raging on in Berlin, with German troops putting out white flags of surrender, with the country emerging from the nightmare into which the Nazis had plunged it, those envoys of the Führer dashed around the Nuremberg cellars hiding and rehidng the broken lance next to which he had conceived the idea of world dominance!

No sooner had one madness, born of the lust for world dominance on the part of the Aryans (or rather, the German steel tycoons and financial bigwigs), been reduced to ashes than another reared its ugly head: the United States now believed that the world was its happy hunting ground and should bow to its economic and military power. The other Western countries, including Britain, whose empire was coming apart at the seams under the blows of the national liberation movement, were relegated to secondary roles.

True, power had changed hands in Britain as the Labor leader Clement Attlee took over. But Churchill now felt his hands untied and on March 5, 1946, in Truman's presence, called for a struggle against the Soviets on all fronts², with the Anglo-Saxons spearheading it. That restructuring of relations within the Western world had its effect on the system of Masonic organizations in Europe and all over the world.

The European "brothers," including the London-based Scottish Rite "law-makers," were from now on to play a minor role while US Freemasonry—the Northern and the Southern jurisdictions (which acted hand in glove, incidentally)—was taking over as the "Big Brother" of the movement. Nazi occupation had weakened European Masonry and made it more pliant. Its pluralism proved useful in infiltrating the leadership of political parties. Masons in the top echelons of European parties could effectively prevent them from getting out of hand and taking some dangerous, unforeseeable step. The Masonic

² Churchill delivered his speech at the ceremony in Fulton when the Westminster College presented honoris causa doctorates to two leading Masons, Truman and Churchill; he had agreed the outlines of his address with Truman during an earlier visit to the US and talks with the US President in Florida.

mechanism already in place was a handy tool for manipulating public opinion and coordinating the actions of disparate and seemingly incompatible forces in the struggle against the common enemy – the Soviet Union and its allies.

The Americans did not overlook the practical angle either: the restoration of Western Europe's capitalist structures, industry and finances to the old level was to bolster their positions and yield dividends. A plan was worked out (and named after US Secretary of State George Marshall) as the principal tool of economic intervention; the mechanism to split up Europe into blocs, to divide Germany (which, incidentally, suited those who feared the re-emergence of an economically strong Germany), to disrupt world trade and normal state-to-state relations and to fuel international tensions was set in motion.

The "brothers" clearly had a hand on the controls of that mechanism. Here are just a few facts. The first ever atomic attack on people, the use of atomic weapons for blackmail and the escalation of the arms race were sanctioned by the 33-degree Mason Harry Truman.³

The first ever call for the cold war was sounded by Mason Winston Churchill (with Truman's blessing).

The onslaught on the economic independence of Western Europe (disguised as the Marshall Plan) was directed by the 33-degree Mason George Marshall.

Truman and West European Freemasons orchestrated the formation of NATO.

Don't we "owe" to that cohort the instigation of hostility between the West and the Soviet Union, which had done so much to liberate Europe as well as itself from Nazism?

We have already seen how Masonic channels were used to organize struggle against democratic and antifascist parties in Europe, to encourage the emergent fascist regimes, to plan acts of terror and provocation against left parties and to prepare acts of armed intervention in countries which were considered "threatened" with the rise of the Left to power.

My journalistic fortunes brought me into contact with different people and we discussed very different things. There

³ By a quirk of history, the lance of Longinus was in the hands of Truman at that time: it had been brought to the US by Dwight Eisenhower. Eventually, the lance was returned to Austria.

are many reasons to remember a conversation I had with a Latin American journalist and Mason in the late 1970s; I put it down at the time. Here is what he said:

"Today the Grand Masonic Lodge, responsible for the Masonic movement in countries of Latin America and counting among its members many presidents, ministers and leaders of major political parties of the continent, advocates incorporation into the 'terrestrial East-West axis'."

When I asked him to make himself clear, he explained:

"The 'East' is the first, historical 'promised land,' so to speak, that is, Israel; the 'West' is the second 'promised land' that we have today—the United States."

"What is the purpose of incorporation into the 'terrestrial axis?'"

"To fight Evil, which imperils the great 'terrestrial axis.'"

The journalist smiled at the face I pulled:

"You see, the 'terrestrial axis'—the 'East-West' or, rather, the 'Israel-US' axis—stands for Good. Everything that stands in its way—and there are many such factors, but first and foremost what the lodges call 'the peril of untrue influence' (i.e., the influence of materialist, communist ideas), is to be removed. Our movement, directed by the 'axis,' is trying 'to put a new soul into people' and 'to cleanse Earth from Evil.'"

I told my interlocutor that it was hardly realistic to try and achieve US pre-eminence in Latin America: there were traditions of the national liberation movement, epitomized by such people as Bolivar, José Martí, Sandino and Allende, traditions of the revolutionary and anti-imperialist movement, to which, incidentally, Masonic authorities contributed as well. Even if some people in Washington viewed the murder of Allende and the installation of the Pinochet fascist dictatorship as the victory of "Good" over "Evil," how could those who were feeling at first hand the effects of the dictatorship be convinced of that?

The journalist was visibly agitated. I thought that my arguments had been on target—but the reason was different. He told me that I merely misunderstood the very nature of Masonry:

"You are used to political judgements: Allende is a leftist, Pinochet a rightist. But this is not the point: in our movement everyone regardless of affiliation seeks absolute perfection in his field. If he is a leftist, he can be a revolutionary working for

the triumph of his cause, and if a rightist, as you say, he should become an outstanding dictator. Both can be important to the movement. The important thing is to remain loyal even when there is hostility for our goals."

"Do I understand you to say that you may find yourself working for the other camp?"

"Why not? It is important to control every movement which has a future so as eventually to turn untrue influence into true. Moreover, brothers can perform great deeds in various forms, even by formally betraying themselves and their way."

Would it be logical to conclude in the light of what I heard from that man (who told me what Masons wholeheartedly believed) that something along the lines of those convictions is taking place in a number of countries which have thrown off the shackles of colonialism and where Masons in positions of leadership guarantee continued links with neocolonialist structures? Can this belief be at the bottom of certain phenomena in the national liberation movements in which moderate, reformist and even patently pro-Western tendencies prevail?

Certainly, there are honest leftists among Masons. But the discipline implicit in the movement is likely to lead such people into a bad crisis and to split their personalities. And those who hesitate "to perform a great deed in any way" can be removed, even physically annihilated (as was the case in Chile) as an obstacle to Masonry.

The problem of relations between Masonry and left movements, including the Communists and the Socialists, has a long history. Way back before World War I many Masons joined socialist parties and trade unions and tried to infiltrate the communist movement. Those tendencies were especially strong in France and Italy. Guiseppe Berti, a veteran of the Italian Communist Party, once remarked that in those years a non-Mason could hardly become the leader of a trade union. Masonic influence in the Italian Socialist Party was so great that when before World War I its members were offered to choose between Freemasonry and socialism, the party's Naples branch of nearly 200 dwindled to 30 at the most!⁴

⁴ Franca Pieroni Bortolotti, *Francesco Misiano. Vita di un internazionalista*, Editori Riuniti, Rome, 1972, p. 31.

The question of co-membership of Masonic lodges and communist parties was given a new edge after World War I, when the Communist International had been formed. Addressing the Second Congress of the Comintern in 1920, Antonio Graziadei, a delegate of the Italian Socialist Party, spoke against dual membership. "This question is of little interest to the Russians but has immense importance to Latin countries, Britain and America," he said. "Freemasonry enjoys much influence in those countries. It is a political organization seeking to win and retain power; it unites industrialists, scientists and businessmen... Freemasons would like to obscure differences between classes through the abstract and formal interpretation of theoretical rights. Moreover, theirs is a secret organization..."

"The comrades affiliated with Freemasonry can control us whereas we for our part have no possibility to control them in their organization."⁵

The Fourth Congress of the Communist International in 1922 reaffirmed the position of principle that it was incompatible with membership of the communist party to participate in "a purely bourgeois organization, which uses formulas of a mystic brotherhood as a guise for electoral and careerist intrigues..."⁶

That question surfaced anew after World War II, when people's democracies and socialist regimes had emerged in some European countries.

That process involved an exacerbation of the class struggle; moreover, some of the Social Democratic leaders, closely linked with international Freemasonry, dramatically swerved to the right and sided themselves with the reactionary forces which opposed socialism and defended the rights of big capitalist proprietors and landowners; such tendencies were in evidence in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and other countries.

Georgy Dimitrov, a courageous fighter against fascism, was among the first to take note of that development.

"People often wonder when well-known statesmen quickly and seemingly without any reason revise their positions on very important issues concerning our state and our nation, or say one thing but do quite the opposite," he wrote in 1946.

⁵ *Second Congress of the Communist International*, Verbatim Records, 1921, pp. 223-224 (in Russian).

⁶ *Bulletin No. 32, Fourth Congress of the Communist International*, Moscow, December 9, 1922, pp. 28-29 (in Russian).

"This is something illogical and absolutely incomprehensible to the outside observer. But the issue is clear enough to those who are aware of the activities of various Masonic lodges. As members of Masonic lodges, those persons receive exhortations and directives from the relevant lodge and bow to its discipline against the interests of the people and the country."⁷

Dimitrov took a strong stand against markedly increased efforts to restore the lodges in Bulgaria and to recruit statesmen and public figures into them.

Dimitrov's conclusions were perfectly true, if fitted against what transpired from the memoirs of many of those persons who eventually emigrated, against recollections of CIA officers and against documents declassified in the US and other countries. Lodges were used to give Masons in socialist countries tasks of a patently intelligence gathering or subversive nature, just as was being done with the Grand Lodges of Western Europe and other continents, reorganized according to American prescriptions.

In that situation the European Masonic movement was relegated to the role of a puppet, which detracted from the richness of life within the lodges and from its former appeal to men of culture. More and more people began to view the "brotherhood" as a means of advancing one's career and making money by serving alien though powerful interests.

Many Masons have realized the false and unhistoric character of the movement's activities and those who have not yet lost their belief in the original ideals of "liberty, equality and fraternity," now sounding hollow, speak up.

The Italian "dissident" Mason Francesco Siniscalchi, who was one of the first to expose the perils of Gelli's conspiracy, says in his introduction to the book *In the Name of the Lodge* that the lust for power that runs through the logic of actions of present-day Masons makes them "everywhere oppose everything new, trying at first to win in a frontal attack. That failing, they attempt to absorb that new through an unnatural *reductio ad unum*, which is the direct opposite of healthy dialectics." Siniscalchi means here the semblance of pluralism, "the free play of forces" which Masons need for some time to manipulate people and rise to power. But as soon as pluralism begins to threaten the basic interests of the ruling classes, the higher Masonic eche-

⁷ Georgy Dimitrov, *Works*, Vol. 12, Sofia, 1964, pp. 235-236.

lons unhesitatingly make their choice: they mercilessly cut off their left wing and sacrifice those who honestly believe in democracy and democratic forms of government.

Far from looking for ways of overcoming injustices born of social inequality, the Masonic ideologists are all for the division of the world into the rich and the poor, the "elite" and "second-rate citizens." They hold up and glorify the big proprietor as the central figure of society, thus asserting a sort of theocracy of wealth. At best they mention in passing the need for the "elite" to be "better prepared" and more up to its tasks instead of wasting time in casinos and on fashionable beaches. Their main preoccupation is to try and defeat the doctrine on the class struggle and the inevitable replacement of the society based on exploitation. Every Masonic author comes up with his own model to justify the property, political and social privileges of the ruling classes and their hold on power.

The far-right French politician Michel Poniatowski, for instance, heartens the capitalists in his book *History Is Free* that "historical determinism is nonexistent" and that "history is free"—not in the sense of its being independent but in that of its dependence on those in government. Says he: "It is at the disposal of our will." That former cabinet minister and scion of an aristocratic Polish family calls for a new approach to the "elite." In his view, "the concept of the elite should be given back its former meaning, i.e., we should understand by it a stratum of 'the best of the best,' selected through competition in every area of human activity."⁸

Although the author reassures the reader that the point is not the reversal to "paleocapitalism" or early feudalism with regard to the "former meaning" of the word "elite" (conversely, "the great complexity of society and its structures will necessitate the formation of a large number of elites"), the thrust of his arguments is that all of them should serve His Majesty Capital. Transnational corporations, TNCs, must be central to the economic structures, he says.⁹

If we strip decor and slogans off the worldwide structure that the "builders of the Temple of Solomon" are trying to erect, we will see a conglomeration of monopolies (both TNCs and smaller companies that make up the world financial oligarchy) with

⁸ M. Poniatowski, *L'histoire est libre*, Albin Michel, Paris, 1982, p. 65.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

a Masonic apron tied round it. It is the moneybags who are the superelite, sanctified by "selection through natural competition" — that same competition which has bred gruesome wars.

Masonry is headed by people from the upper echelon of today's bourgeoisie and that is why it offers a reflection of many of the processes characteristic of the development of the capitalist class and its power structures over the past few decades.

It is first and foremost the virtually total takeover of power in the US, the leading Western country, by the military-industrial-financial complex. It has led to the physical merger of the monopolies and government. The most striking proof of this fact is the migration of such men as McCone and Casey, Weinberger and Haig from senior posts in monopolies, most of them linked with the war business, to positions of leadership in NATO, the CIA or the US Administration.

It is even more striking that such monopolies, represented by their bosses, do not hesitate to lay down the military and foreign policies of their country, to supervise its intelligence services and repressive agencies, to engineer the overthrow of state leaders in other countries, as McCone (not alone, of course) did with Allende in Chile at the time he was ITT President, and to fill senior diplomatic posts.

This merger epitomizes the political philosophy of the capitalist class, which considers businessmen to be the "chosen ones" and top authorities in every field. Hence the appropriate forms of government and the direct say in deciding who personally should stand at the more important levers of the state machine and lay down policies. Heads of monopolies, billionaires and their like stand higher in the invisible Masonic hierarchy than the White House Administration or other Western governments; they are served by presidents and prime ministers, by secret services and senior army officers, by leading scientists and legions of officials.

Who are those puppeteers who pull the key threads of political and other developments? They appear to be respectable members of society who have a perfect knowledge of the economic jungle, the secrets of profit-making, the specifics of various markets and the mysteries of advertising and who know how to get on the right side of public opinion when necessary.

But it is far away from the limelight that they pursue their chief activities. All those financial tycoons and captains of lead-

ing trusts and monopolies prefer to meet in closed clubs, such as Bohemian in the US, Cercle in Western Europe, or Lions and Rotary (the latter has a membership of around one million). Having pulled down their capes, they preside at gatherings of senior Masonic chieftains that are out of the reach of the profanes. Answering the call of duty, they go to faraway hotels in exotic spots. Hardly any "profane" will believe that they seclude themselves to discuss ways of spiritual improvement, to exchange views on the history of Masonic rites or to trade news of the latest finds in Egyptian studies.

The high-powered Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) has a basic role to play in formulating US foreign policy. It was set up in 1921 on the initiative of New York businessmen and university experts who had attended the Paris Peace Conference. Even at that time US businessmen thought of expanding into the world market and winning "lebensraum" from the old empires. The founding fathers of the CFR believed that the future of the US lay beyond its borders. The Council's role further grew after World War II. It was on that body's recommendations that the US proposed the establishment of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The Council is financed by major monopolies. David Rockefeller became its head in 1970. In 1980 it had 1,948 members, including IBM President Frank Cary, Texas Instruments President Mark Shepherd, Standard Oil President Clifton Garvin, Jr., Irving Shapiro, President of the Du Pont de Nemours chemicals giant, *The Washington Post* President Katharine Graham, and AFL-CIO President Joseph Lane Kirkland. New people are admitted by the director's decision if they have the recommendation of at least two members. President Carter, for instance, was found unfit to be a member.

The US public learned of the Council's functions and the role played in it by leading American businessmen in the following way.

During the 1971 unrest at Harvard University (Massachusetts) students, having taken over a professor's office on the campus, found records of a rather unusual conference which had taken place at Pratt House in Park Avenue in New York three years previously, in January 1969. Its subject was "Intelligence and Foreign Policy," and its purpose to update US foreign

policy documents. A report was delivered by Richard Bissell, a senior CIA official and a man who was remarkable in his own way. He had been behind the idea of spying overflights of Soviet territory by U-2 planes (the shooting down of Gary Powers' plane in 1960 scuttled plans for a summit meeting in Paris) and had masterminded the Bay of Pigs operation against Cuba. The failure of the landing party in April 1961 had put an end to Bissell's career in the CIA, but his services were still valued. He was viewed as the US "doctrine-keeper" and was given the honor of delivering the main report at the conference. The gathering was chaired by Douglas Dillon, head of the United Aircraft Corporation and a former US Deputy Secretary of the Treasury, and the audience included CIA chief Allen Dulles, IBM vice president and assistant defense secretary Eugene Fubini, CFR vice president and financier Frank Altschul and others. The record was kept by Professor Harris, and it was that document that fell into the students' hands.

The doctrine unveiled by Bissell to the bigwigs of business was eventually summarized by former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in his memoirs: "The new doctrine justifies unlimited intervention to promote internal change in countries that are both friend and foe; it has been directed against countries that do not threaten our national security and may indeed be allies of the United States."¹⁰

The CFR spawned and continues to sponsor numerous committees oriented toward "unlimited intervention" in international affairs. The Council played the decisive role in the rise and transformation of major international clubs of moneybags-cum-politicians, such as the Bilderberg Club and the Trilateral Commission. All those committees, clubs, commissions and other organizations set up on the CFR's initiative are motley but their core is made up, as a rule, of the same persons, all of them holding the highest degrees of the Masonic Scottish Rite Order.

That peculiarity was noted by Luis M. Gonzalez-Mata, a one time CIA agent, in his book *The True Masters of the World*; he cited a list of the names of persons who in the postwar period were in positions of leadership in the international Masonic network:

¹⁰Henry Kissinger, *White House Years*, Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1979, p. 658.

"Allen Dulles, founder of the CIA and its director from 1953 to 1961, lawyer of US Mafia bosses Meyer Lansky and Salvatore Luciano, and Scottish Rite Mason.

"Joseph H. Retinger, diplomatic counsellor of the Polish government in exile in London during World War II, secretary of the European Movement, secretary general of the Bilderberg Club, and Scottish Rite Mason.

"Thomas Braden, head of the CIA's foreign policy sector and Scottish Rite Mason.

"William Donovan, former director of the Office of Strategic Services (CIA) and Scottish Rite Mason.

"Manlio Brosio, Italian, NATO Secretary General and Scottish Rite Mason.

"Graham Martin, US Ambassador to Italy and Scottish Rite Mason.

"Fiorello La Guardia, New York Mayor and Scottish Rite Mason.

"Harry Truman, US President and Scottish Rite Mason.

"Gerald Ford, US President and Scottish Rite Mason.

"Licio Gelli, head of the Propaganda-2 Lodge of the Grand Orient of Italy and Scottish Rite Mason."¹¹

The list could be continued with many of the names mentioned in this book. But the author of *The True Masters of the World* should be credited with disclosing the role of Licio Gelli and his lodge's contacts with international, primarily American, Freemasonry more than three years before the P-2 scandal broke out.

Gonzalez-Mata, who fulfilled several subversive assignments for the CIA, in particular, by infiltrating the ranks of the left extremists during the May 1968 riots in Paris, believes that international "nongovernmental" organizations set up by American Masons actually are centers which plan major political actions in the interest of international capital. For instance, the Bilderberg Club, established in May 1954 on the initiative of the above-mentioned Retinger and Prince Bernard of Holland, decided in secret sessions the formation of the Common Market and some similarly important actions of the West.

The Club is known to have been named after Hotel Bilderberg in Oosterbeek (the Netherlands), the venue of the first

¹¹L. Gonzalez-Mata, *Les vrais maîtres du monde*, Editions Grasset & Fasquelle, Paris, 1979, pp. 20-22.

meeting of its members—American and West European politicians, ideologists and businessmen, all of them Masons. Subsequent meetings were held, as a rule, in hotels belonging to the Rothschilds and the Rockefellers. Anticommunism has been a permanent item on Bilderberg's agenda; another regular subject was "the danger of nationalism," meaning the refusal of individual Western countries to bow to US imperial policy. In 1957, for example, club members discussed "manifestations of nationalism in the Western bloc:" they were worried by de Gaulle's policy and by some tendencies in Spanish policy. The meeting was attended by Chase Manhattan Bank chairman David Rockefeller, NATO generals Gruenther and Lemnitzer and US Secretary of State Dean Rusk, among others.

The meetings that followed tackled no less pressing issues, such as support for the racist regime in South Africa, struggle against Cuba, suppression of the national liberation movement in Latin America and US-West European relations. Developments in Portugal in 1974 were another headache: "the Revolution of the Red Carnations" seemed to threaten a marked drift to the left on the Iberian Peninsula. Bilderberg gave at one of its meetings the green light to Spínola's attempt to pull off a coup in Lisbon.

The United States was not quite happy with the club: there were among its members "liberal" European politicians who had not interfered with General de Gaulle when he closed NATO's headquarters in France and took his country out of the bloc's military setup. The club, cast in an old mold, could not meet the needs of US global ambitions. When it transpired that the club's patron, Prince Bernard of Holland, took bribes from the US Lockheed Corporation and Bilderberg was compromised, steps were taken to put together an organization that could cope with global tasks. That role of the brain trust of international cartels was assigned to the Trilateral Commission, founded also by David Rockefeller. At that time every effort was made to stress the "informal" and "nongovernmental" character of the commission and its functions as an advisory body to coordinate actions of the three centers of today's capitalism, the United States, Western Europe and Japan (which had already gathered momentum and overtaken its Old and New World rivals in many ways).

Is there any evidence that it is a Masonic or paramasonic organization? Isn't it a sample of "demonization," i.e., what the Soviet Union's foes do with regard to it?

It does not seem likely. We always conduct our analysis of that movement and everything related to it in the historical, political and ideological context of Masonry. One of the reasons of its viability and influence is precisely that it changes some of its attributes when Masonic policy-makers decide that a new stage of history has set in, demanding new methods and arguments. What remains intact is the inmost ambitions, whereas the "paraphernalia," tactics and methods can be revised.

Gonzalez-Mata describes in detail in his book how the American sector of the "triangle" exploited the crises of the early 1970s to bolster its teetering hegemony. Manipulation of the "oil crises," which badly hit the West European economies, had an important role to play. The food question, too, was a potent weapon in the hands of the American monopolies. The arms race, however, was the principal and most important issue.

It was on that front that the new rich of the war business—the California and Texas missile, gun and computer tycoons, members of one of the most fashionable US clubs, Bohemian—began to push back the old monopolies. The 2,000 members of the club include, in addition to Ronald Reagan, former presidents Nixon and Ford, Kissinger, Haig and Rockefeller, many senior Pentagon and CIA officials, and Edward Teller, the father of the hydrogen bomb and a scientist who has made the war business his own and who never tires of repeating the militarists' war cry "better dead than Red." Leaning toward the "Bohemians," that factory of US presidents and secretaries of state, is the Pittsburg Duquesne Club, which counts among its members the Rockefellers, Morgans, Mellons and representatives of major corporations, such as General Motors, Rockwell International, Ford, Goodyear and US Steel.

The two Masonic clubs in fact constitute the "chief executive committee" of Armageddon. The "Bohemians" chose for themselves the fine-sounding name of an association of men with an inclination for literature, the arts, music and drama; it sits on them about as well as the name "opera lovers' club" would on the American Mafia. As for their motto, "Weaving spiders, come not here," the reality is the direct opposite: the club is a can of

spiders batten on army contracts, international tension and conflicts.

Having seized control of the US Administration (against what President Eisenhower, who coined the term "military-industrial complex," warned in his day), that crowd pushes developments in a dangerous direction.

Although there still are moderates from among the capitalist class on the membership rolls of the Bilderberg Club and the Trilateral Commission, their voices have long been drowned in the clamor of war monopolies for more and more profit.

A program with the high-sounding name "Democracy Must Work: Trilateral Agenda for the Decade" was offered to the participants in the session of the Trilateral Commission in Washington's Mayflower Hotel in April 1984.

But where should "democracy" work, and how? Judging by the agenda of the session, it should be where the wheels of the war machine are revolving. West Germany, Britain and Italy got a pat on the head for having consented to the deployment of US missiles in their territories. But that did not seem enough, and recommendations were made to build up conventional weapons. As for the targets for that juggernaut, mention was made of North Africa (primarily Libya, whose policy is especially disliked by Washington), the Persian Gulf (Iran and the oilfields), the Far East and Southwest Asia. Particular pressure was put on the Japanese: the Trilateral Commission insisted that Japan should become more active in the West's war preparations.

Bilderberg Club members met in Stockholm just a month later. The audience was almost the same and the leadership, too, almost man for man: Rockefeller, Kissinger, NATO Secretary General Carrington, his predecessor Luns, and Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, Rogers. The latter urged the Europeans to tighten their belts and increase spending on the arms buildup and modernization.

How should "democracy" work in such circumstances? To promote militarism and totalitarianism?

Holding onto the swelling military pie, all those banks and corporations and government officials and experts connected with them are ready to make up any argument to avoid any drop in military spending, any cut in arms programs.

As everyone knows, military contractors get exceptional tax privileges. Having earned a profit of \$ 2,000 million between

1981 and 1984, for instance, Boeing, far from paying a single cent, received a refund of \$ 285 million on taxes paid earlier. Since 1981, the 275 biggest war corporations have been paying the Treasury just one-third of what they should. Small wonder that the US federal debt has grown to astronomic proportions. Moreover, "the rules of the game" are such that the working people rather than corporations bear the larger part of the tax burden.

All this effectively gives the answer to the question of who really rules America, a government freely elected by the people or an invisible committee running monopoly affairs.

It also supplies motivation for the conspiracy of the Western military-industrial complexes against the vital interests of the peoples of the world. The source of international tension and the war threat is monopoly capital, drunk with profit, and its arms-bearers from the Masonic Armageddon committees.

NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, Rogers, came out before journalists with a hammer in his hand to announce NATO's next Autumn Forge exercises. This caused much surprise—but there can be little doubt about who that eccentricity was addressed to: there are those to whom the hammer along with the try square, the trowel and the dividers is an important symbol. The chairman's hammer is highly visible at many public gatherings in the US and elsewhere.

There have always been many military men among the Masons, their percentage comparable only to that of businessmen and financiers. Their share is especially high in the Scottish Rite, the major trend of today's Masonry that boasts of having descended from the Templars. But every Masonic trend—be it "Latin" or "Roman," let alone "Teutonic" (German)—has always eagerly cultivated a military core in the "brotherhood." That tradition was furthered and cemented by wars of liberation (in America and, partly, in Europe) and of conquest (including colonial seizures), which also complemented military functions with political ones. American Freemasonry, for example, has always had a considerable military-political "slant." Itinerant "military lodges" followed British troops to the New World way back during the wars against the indigenous Indian population and the subsequent struggle against the French rivals. They followed old ways and were open to rank-and-file of-

ficers and sailors, and also to merchants and artisans. Scottish Rite lodges became very popular on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean because they accepted people from the middle classes and because Masonic affiliation offered the possibility of a fast rise up the social ladder. Eventually those lodges, which took to heart the locals' interests, began to display the tendency to break off with Britain. In 1759 the British "military lodges" in Canada elected in Quebec their own Grand Master, and in 1769 the St Andrew Scottish Rite Lodge and three "military lodges" established in Boston a Provincial Grand Lodge, renamed the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in 1782. A wealthy landowner, William Ball, became the head of the Grand Provincial Lodge of Pennsylvania in 1760. In November 1752 the Scottish Rite Lodge of Pennsylvania accepted at the small township of Fredericksburg a Royal Army Major by the name George Washington, who was to become the leader of American Masonry and its drive for the cessation of America from Great Britain.

The entire officers' corps of the US Army, from the commander-in-chief down to petty officers, were Masons, says the book *Masonry: Its Past and Present* in two volumes, published in Russia in 1914-1915. They were the majority among those who signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the Constitution in 1787.

The early public ceremonies of American Masonry were a reflection of its paramilitary character. For example, army troops took part in a march-past in honor of Washington in Philadelphia in 1779, organized by the military American Union Lodge. The French, at war with the British at the time, were not to be outdone and had their military lodges as well.

Military Masons had a considerable role to play also in late 19th century Europe, in particular, in the Piemonte Army, commanded by the supporters of the Savoy royal family that was admitted into Masonry, and in Garibaldi's forces, which were completing the unification of Italy. The role of that trend kept growing. "According to trustworthy statistics, up to 35 percent of Italy's officers in active service frequented the lodges," G. Silvano Spinetti, an expert on Italian Masonry commented.¹²

¹²G. Silvano Spinetti, op. cit., p. 46.

In many ways this was associated with liberation missions in which Masonic warriors or bolivars and garibaldis, who commanded them, distinguished themselves.

The Masonic ideological and mythological paraphernalia are a convenient guise for the tycoons of the military-industrial complex today. Most horrendous preparations for a third world war and programs to produce most inhuman means of mass destruction are served in the packaging of concepts and terms borrowed from Greek myths, knightly legends and other Masonic lore, all the more so since the "brotherhood" claims kinsmanship with all the major religions and faiths, from Egyptian to Indian and Zoroastrian ones, let alone Cabala and the Bible.

We have already noted that the "brothers" are fond of marking with special signs, understandable to the initiated, everything that is called upon to add to the power of the "brotherhood" and to further its involvement in the mainstream of the economy and politics.

NATO offers a good example in this respect. As you ponder the names of the alliance's military exercises — Autumn Forge, associated with the myth of the descent of the architect of the Temple of Solomon from Vulcan, the ancient Roman god of fire and metalworking; Distant Hammer of the same vintage; or the idyllic Arcadian Express, reminiscent of the Masonic dream of Arcadia, a land of harmony and mysterious symbolism—you realize to what an extent NATO's dangerous war preparations are enveloped in Masonic attributes.

The arms race, perilous to the human race, is so dear to those in the military-industrial establishment who are carrying it on because it is more lucrative than any other business. Hence the sweet sensations of businessmen as they see profits from army contracts fill their coffers.

As we discussed Italian Masonry and Gelli's lodge in particular, we saw that many NATO generals and admirals were high-ranking Masons. General Lemnitzer, commander of the US 5th Army, with whose intelligence service Gelli cooperated, was one of them. It was no chance either that the Italian secret services were formed in 1949, simultaneously with Italy's entry into NATO, under the supervision of Manlio Brosio, the country's defense minister and a Scottish Rite Mason.

All the top tiers of NATO and its committees are riddled with "brothers," and they can decide many questions not within

NATO, but in their lodges. There are Masonic lodges virtually at all the NATO or US bases in other countries; they are useful for contacts with Masons in the host country so as to brainwash and manipulate them.

In Italy, where senior diplomatic posts were filled by Masons closely linked to the US military-industrial complex, US military lodges were formed in addition to the Colosseum Lodge for the staff of the American Embassy in Rome. Special lodges for US Army officers were established at NATO centers and bases in Italy in the late 1950s and early 1960s, including Verona American in Verona, George Washington in Vicenza, Benjamin Franklin in Livorno, Harry Truman at Bagnoli near Naples, Aviano at the Friuli base and G. MacLenan in San Vito.

When the NATO headquarters were in Paris, the Masonic lodge of the French capital was used for friendly "agapae," i.e., ritualized banquets for "brothers" that were attended by officers from France and other countries. Since the Grand Orient of France has its own rites and more liberal traditions, the Americans established a "special relationship" with a more right-wing, pro-Atlantic trend, the Neuilly Lodge, which the French ironically called the "American Orient;" Lemnitzer himself was the patron of relations with that lodge.

There are many US Masonic lodges at the NATO bases in West Germany, and the US military bases in Zaragoza, Torrejon, Rota and Sevilla also have lodges.¹³

The exposure of Gelli's lodge made Italian political observers take another look at many recent developments, including the country's consent to accommodate US nuclear-powered submarines and missiles.

Italy's decision to accept the missiles sent an important signal primarily to the West Germans, who, though the first to call for the deployment of US nuclear missiles in Western Europe, for obvious historical reasons did not want to be the first to go through with actual deployment. Italy's decision untied their hands, and also enabled the US to exert unprecedented pressure on other West European countries to make them accept missiles. Methods similar to those used in Italy were brought into play along with outright pressure "to twist the arms" of Belgium and the Netherlands: those countries, too, have closed, se-

¹³See Jose A. Ferrer Bemmeli, *Masoneria espanola contemporanea*, Vol. 2, Madrid, 1980, p. 194.

cret lodges, known as "black," which are directly linked with government and army circles.

Much credit for the deployment of US missiles in Western Europe thus goes to Gelli's "team," and one can hardly disagree with the notable Italian political scientist Giorgio Galli when he says: "The weakness of our political system, so obvious in the context of the P-2 scandal, poses a threat not just to Italy but to Europe."¹⁴

The Masonic machinery unquestionably played an important role in that affair because the Masonic hierarchy with its secret degrees and mysterious nooks, where people from "irreconcilable" factions or parties may come face to face, is perfectly suitable for plotting most covert and nefarious operations that call for total mimicry. One can hardly conceive of a better tool for the quiet infiltration of the governments and parties of other countries by monopoly capital, the real leader of international Masonry.

Masonry is ideal also for secret arms trafficking so as to convert weapons of death into cash.

The CIA uses its special relations with Masonic organizations (like the P-2 Lodge) and neofascist terrorist groups (like Turkey's Gray Wolves) to run weapons to terrorists of every ilk and also to push drugs and arms on the black market; emissaries of the CIA and other Western secret services and Masonic "brothers" make fabulous profits in this way. That network is used also for acts of provocation: one dark deed leads to another.

In November 1982 Carlo Palermo, an investigator from Trento in the north of Italy, arrested the international arms trafficker Henry Arsan. The investigator believed that he had "finished the largest arms trafficking business ever known to the world."¹⁵ The crook, who had made his home in Italy, dealt both in arms and in drugs (and also doubled for years as an agent of the US Drugs Enforcement Administration, DEA, concerned with fighting drugs trafficking). He cooperated as well with the CIA and the West German secret services, which used him to find a market for "surplus" weaponry, such as Cobra helicopters, Leopard tanks, light warships and missiles.

Arsan, who operated mostly in the Middle East, relied primarily on the Italian secret services. Colonel Massimo Pugliese,

¹⁴ *Panorama*, June 15, 1981, p. 35.

¹⁵ *La Repubblica*, June 20, 1984, p. 15.

a member of the P-2 Lodge, formed with the knowledge of General Santovito, the SISMI chief and another P-2 member, a sort of consortium to supply Arsan with information about the international arms market. The chief expert was Glauco Partel, an Italian specialist on missiles, who for 15 years cooperated with the US National Security Agency. They were helped by Vincenzo Giovannelli, a businessman from Sardinia, who was the monopoly supplier of the bases of US nuclear-powered submarines at Maddalena Island. Pugliese, who was close to Santovito and to General Miceli, a fascist, P-2 member and SISMI ex-chief, was especially useful thanks to his connections among Masons involved with the military business. When Gelli had fled to the United States, Pugliese made contact with Armando Corona, Grand Master of the Grand Orient of Italy, so that customers (also Masons) could make certain through the Grand Master that Pugliese really was one of the "family." (Like the Mafia, the Masons call their community "the family.")¹⁶

Both the clients of that "consortium" of death merchants and the banks that financed it were scattered all over the world. Some of the banks were directly controlled by the CIA, such as the Nugan Hand Bank in Australia, the CIA's front for arms trafficking. Eugene Bartholomew, an agent of the bank, testified that materiel for arms supplies came from the CIA's warehouses. The head of the bank, Frank Nugan, was found killed in his car in January 1980. He had on his person a visiting card of William Colby, the then CIA Director. But even after that mysterious death Bartholomew remained Arsan's and Pugliese's agent. In one of the deals the "consortium" cast about for a buyer of a shipment of 66 American Cobra helicopters, initially intended for Iran. In another deal Somalian leaders approached Washington for a large shipment of weapons and were referred to the Italian middlemen. Agreement was reached at a meeting in the summer of 1982 on the delivery of 116 M48-A5 tanks, 20 Cobra helicopters, 1,000 Tow missiles and other hardware to the total value of 400 million dollars.

When American banks declined to guarantee the deal, the "consortium" turned to financiers from the Italian Socialist Party, in particular, one Ferdinando Mach di Palmstein. At long last, in October 1982, all the details were agreed and papers

¹⁶*Corriere della Sera*, October 12, 1983, p. 5.

signed with the Somalians. Was it a coincidence that precisely at that time the Italian Socialist ex-Defense Minister, Lelio Lagorio, went on a visit to Mogadishu?

Investigator Palermo, however, spoiled it all by arresting the members of the "consortium." General Santovito was charged with "personal and direct involvement" in the arms sales.

Sifting through the papers, telex messages and other documents of the "consortium," the investigator found evidence of many similar covert deals. He told journalists that the arms traffickers were raking in fabulous profits and that the undercover enterprise was named Horus (in full accord with the Masonic tradition): some of the lodges' more important rites are associated with Horus, the son of Osiris and Isis.¹⁷ The ancient name was the cover for arch-modern and arch-dishonest deals, which filled the pockets of both American and Italian "brothers."

Some of the tricks played by those crooks were so colorful that they are worth recounting. The Italians have the word *bidonata* for cases of the more shameless deception of public opinion, and it fits perfectly the stories below.

Bidonata No. 1.

One Rolando Pelizza, a son of a shoe shop owner from Chiari and a patent crook fond of living high at someone else's expense, began telling locals that a soldier, having returned from Germany after the war, gave him a secret device of the Nazis that could produce "anti-atoms" and destroy both life and property — a sort of "death-ray" generator. Neighbors poked fun at Pelizza but when he told his story to Pugliese, the latter rushed with the "astounding news" to General Santovito and the leaders of the Christian Democratic Party. Moreover, being a supporter of the former King of Italy, who was living in exile in Portugal, Pugliese went to see him and asked him to use his royal influence to interest the US Administration in Pelizza's "discovery." In August 1976 the US Ambassador to Rome officially raised the question of purchasing "death-ray" generator and allocated 250,000 dollars for tests. President Ford's personal envoy, Matthew Tutino, came to Italy in September. Pelizza was offered to test his device by shooting down an American satellite. Pugliese and Co., who had latched onto the "death rays," asked 5 million dollars for that "service."

¹⁷See *Panorama*, April 25, 1983, p. 54.

The US Department of State (on whose behalf Tutino acted as well) was delighted with the idea of finding one more way of killing people (the Americans were working on neutron weapons at the time). Meanwhile, Pelizza had served two prison terms for petty fraud and extortion. The representative of the White House and the Department of State nevertheless opened his arms to the crooks and congratulated them on behalf of "all American scientists." First the Americans refused to sacrifice a satellite, then agreed — but Pelizza began stalling: "I can't do it, it is snowing here." The crooks used the money given by the Americans to cook up a video recording of a "field test," which made an "immense impression." The leader of the Italian Christian Democrats was ready personally to take the recording to Washington. Pugliese was given 6 billion lire by a trustful Sardinian industrialist and another 13 billion lire were added by a mysterious society called *Traspraesa* based in Lichtenstein, headed by Marquis Federico Pallavicino and Count Josef Merano and acting under the auspices of the Industrial Commission of the Italian Chamber of Deputies. Pelizza, however, was in no hurry to go ahead with the "tests." The fuss over the "project" continued all the way to the middle of 1979. In short, the "consortium" and the crook led everybody round their finger and made a bundle.¹⁸

Bidonata No. 2.

A diplomatic envoy stationed in Rome asked the "consortium" to evaluate the French missile *Exocet*, explaining that he would like to buy a large shipment of those weapons at double the regular price. At that time the Falklands war was raging on and it was easy to guess that the prospective buyers were the Argentines, who had just sunk a British warship with an *Exocet*. The deal was to be arranged through Zaire, where Pugliese and his team had good connections. It should be remembered that the P-2 lodge had a long-standing relationship with Argentina, especially with its top brass. Acting on behalf of the client was army officer Alfredo Corti, a Masonic "brother" and member of the P-2 lodge, who represented the Argentine Air Force and Navy in Paris. However, the fear of spoiling relations with Britain and getting on the wrong side of the United States, a regular partner in such deals, prevailed. Having promised the Ar-

¹⁸ *La Repubblica*, November 27, 1984.

gentinians a shipment of French missiles, Pugliese arranged an "information leak." *The Sunday Times* of London reported the negotiations, the money was lost – but relations with the United States and Britain remained intact.

Bidonata No. 3.

Bartholomew sent in from Australia an unusual order: some party wanted three atomic bombs! But the order raised no brows and a businesslike answer was wired to Sydney: "Three atomic bombs weighing 90 kg each with 40 kg of enriched uranium are available. Yield – 20 megatons. Delivery to the territory of the customer country. All the three bombs can be assembled and primed within six weeks if 60 percent of the price is paid. Net price – \$ 924 million."¹⁹

Letters of guarantee were exchanged, arranging for payment through a Luxembourg bank. It was agreed that the customer could merely inspect the bombs and take them away if he so wished. The last letter specified that Israel and South Africa were excluded from the list of possible recipients.

It was at that point that the sense of duty to the "historical homeland" took the better of one of Pugliese's men (which was precisely what the masterminds of the plan had hoped for) and he went with his information about a suspicious order to an Israeli intelligence officer, who operated from the Israel consulate in Milan. Syria was named as the most likely buyer. Israel's wellwisher never guessed that the plan had originated in Washington: the news was expected to make a certain impression on the Israeli government and senior commanders. But Tel Aviv knows US plans better than Washington does. The Israelis made the necessary inquiries and were reassured. "The operation started by Bartholomew was in fact directed against Israel, which was about to complete preparations for invading Lebanon. Its purpose was somewhat to cool a few war-thirsty hotheads," the Italian weekly *Panorama* noted.²⁰

Israel was well aware of Washington's real stand: the plans of intervention in Lebanon had been discussed and agreed with the Americans in advance, six months before the invasion. The Israelis had given their "strategic ally" extra guarantees that the United States would not be directly involved in fighting. (The

¹⁹ *La Repubblica*, June 20, 1984, p. 15.

²⁰ *Panorama*, June 18, 1984, p. 49.

US is known to have sent its marines into war-ravaged Lebanon later.) If anything, it was not American Masons who took the better of their Israeli "brothers" in that game. Indeed, it should be remembered that the Israeli degrees of Masonry begin where the "Scottish," "French" and all the others end, with the 34th, and go all the way up to the 99th.

The P-2 lodge played its role in that operation of misinformation as well.

Masonic middlemen are paid well for their services in such operations, of course—but it is just crumbs from the master's table: the American monopolies keep the "pie" of army contracts for themselves. They make efforts for it to grow from year to year by putting on line ever more sophisticated tools of destruction. In nurturing the Moloch of war, they remember (just as in the case of NATO's exercises) to package their products in nice-looking Biblical and Masonic wrappings.

In May 1984 *The Washington Post* published Rick Atkinson's article "Thinking the Unthinkable, Obscure Office Drafts World War III Script," in which he pictured that unholy "kitchen." "More than 500 times a year...," he wrote, "World War III erupts in a concrete bunker down the road from the Price Slasher Food Barn and Grand China Restaurant in the Maryland suburb of White Oak. Into a vault with a 50-ton door ... military scientists in the past 14 years have dragged virtually all of the nation's strategic weapons systems... When the buttons are pressed and switches flipped, a mansion-sized machine, named Aurora after the Roman goddess of dawn, zaps the weapons with 10 million volts of gamma rays to simulate the radiation from a nuclear explosion."

The purpose of those tests—each with a symbolic codename, such as Diamond Skulls or Midas Myth (after the legendary king whose touch turned everything to gold)—was to test new warheads. Weapons are being forged there... "Why use a sledgehammer when a tack hammer will do what you need to do?" Department of Energy spokesman David Miller asked. "Bottom line is bigger bang for the buck."

It is indeed a wish worthy of the "smiths" making weapons for the NATO "hammer-men."

Here we again come across those mystic ideological rationales of the arms race which have been borrowed from the Masonic and Biblical stock and are used by the high-ranking US

officials to motivate the need to prepare for the last decisive battle, Armageddon.

The effects of such a policy on the economy and social security are obvious, but special mention should be made of the serious damage caused to the area which the West is fond of holding up as an example and using to reproach others, namely, civil liberties and the possibility to exercise historical democratic rights.

The cult of brute force and of the superiority, which supposedly comes with it automatically, is eating into the Americans' mentality. Violence against other peoples, such as the people of tiny Grenada, which was ravaged by the US marines, and intervention in the affairs of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua amount to the denial of the freedom of the American people themselves. The ideals won by the Americans in the age of the struggle against slavery, racism and colonial dependence are being betrayed. When portions of the text of the Bill of Rights were read to Americans during sociological surveys, many of them thought that it was some communist document smuggled in by the Kremlin propagandists.

The frenzy with which those who protest against the arms race and the nuclear fever and advocate peaceful talks are thrown behind the bars in many Western countries is one of the more disgusting manifestations of militarism.

All this shows that the Masonic war hammer crushes the rights of not only other nations but of the Masons' own people, all to the clamor of hypocritical discourses on "human rights" on the part of those moneybags who
trample those rights underfoot from day
to day, from hour
to hour.

Conclusion

Tracing the history of Freemasonry, one can hardly escape the conclusion that that movement, which had originally incorporated bourgeois-revolutionary, anticlerical and even socialist elements, has undergone a deep-going evolution and ended up in the camp which is fundamentally hostile to democracy, the camp of militarism and crusades against ideas of progress.

The slogan "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" was made into a picklock to public opinion and began to be used to smear everything new and progressive and at the same time to protect monopoly privileges and to tightly seal "the Temple of Solomon" from the winds of liberation, genuine equality among nations, and the social emancipation of the working people. The facade, still magnificent on the outside, conceals ravaging ills, moral impoverishment, and outright injustices. The drive for profit eats into the human spirit and creativity.

That is why the Masonic movement, once a beacon of culture, can no longer boast byrons or shellies, goethes or hugots, beaumarchaises, goldonis or beethovens... It has little patience with the independence and daring of thought and talent. What capital needs is vassals linked by pecuniary rather than spiritual interests to pursue its plans and ideas. Monopolies need salieris rather than mozarts, villainy rather than genius... More and more store is laid by horoscope-readers, not real scientists, and also by art poisoned with violence, sex and sectarian mysticism.

The crisis of Masonry is especially manifest in its spiritual decline, in the triumph of night over day, of the irrational over the light of thinking. It is evident also in stubborn resistance to the new mode of political thinking and to the efforts to find practical ways of asserting reason and justice and lessening international tensions.

What can we tell by the hysteria and cynicism with which military contracts are pushed through and methods of sanctions, embargoes and severance of state-to-state relations are sanctioned? Clearly, there are secret uncontrollable power centers at work, and this fact cannot help worrying the world public more and more.

The parliamentary and in part juridical enquiry into the subversive and antidemocratic actions of the P-2 lodge in Italy, Stephen Knight's book, which drew British public attention to the Masonic infiltration of the country's vital centers, and publications exposing harmful undercover Masonic operations in other countries show that this mood is far from groundless.

The findings of a study that were published by the newspaper *Aftonbladet* (Sweden) some time ago show that more than 1,000 of Sweden's senior army officers, 35 of its senior judges, 40 of its prosecuting attorneys, hundreds of its clergymen, including bishops, 400 of its bank directors and many Riksdag deputies, let alone journalists (110) and representatives of other liberal professions are members of the secret "brotherhood" patronized by the royal family.

In November 1985 the Finnish newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat* exposed Suomi Loosi 1, a secret lodge which in some ways resembled P-2. The purpose of the lodge was "to consolidate Finland's relations with the West." American and British intelligence officers and Finnish army and intelligence officers and businessmen worked side by side in it. J. Raymond Ylitalo, a former FBI official and head of the political department of the US Embassy in Helsinki, recalled in his memoirs how "brothers" were used to spread provocative rumors that imputed subversive intrigues to Communists and called for their repression.

Growing Masonic influence on the political machinery and economic life of Western countries could not have helped causing a backlash. In Britain, the cradle of today's Freemasonry, *The Sunday Times* reported, a movement against the "Masonic threat" is gathering momentum, involving in particular local government bodies. The Laborites of Lewisham have decided that membership of their party is incompatible with Masonic affiliation, and the municipal councils of Birmingham and Chester have been checked for "secret influence." Curiously enough, a purge of Masons has been launched by the same party which

at the time of the Masonic Prime Minister Attlee opposed any investigation of the Masonic infiltration of higher positions in government.

Stephen Knight recalls in his book, which we have quoted more than once, that in April 1951 the proposal of the Labor MP Fred Longden that a commission be appointed to investigate Masonic influence on the political, religious, social and administrative affairs of the country was flatly turned down by Foreign Secretary Herbert Morrison, who said: "...My right honorable friend the Prime Minister does not think that an enquiry of this kind would be appropriate." Another MP (a Mason, of course) sprang to his feet and asked dramatically: "Would not such an enquiry be an infringement of human liberties?"¹

In March 1985 the same question was raised already at a European level: a member of the Laborite faction of the European Parliament, Pitt, demanded that it should be made incumbent on MP's and EEC officials to declare their Masonic affiliations and added that he was deeply worried by Masonic influence.

There is dissatisfaction in the "brotherhood," too, with the character of Masonic activities today. One of the leaders of West German Masonry, Jürgen Holtorf, in the fall of 1985 complained of "dangerous investigative journalism," which had shown the "brothers" in "an unflattering light" in view of scandals of the previous few years. Trying to rehabilitate Masonry, he wrote a paper to prove that P-2 was not a genuinely Masonic lodge. Yet he had to admit the futility of his efforts and characterized them as a "Sisyphean task;" he was worried that a parliamentary enquiry into Masonic activities and their exposure might be the undoing of the "brotherhood."

A similar mood began to gain ground even in the US, the present-day stronghold of Masonry. The Grand Masters of North American lodges noted at their convention in February 1985 that many lodges were dormant and discussed proposals for boosting their prestige. The Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, for instance, came up with Project Solomon II, which was a sort of five-year plan for large-scale recruitment.

And that in a country whose Congress has Masons galore in both chambers. In 1979, according to the Masonic service association, there were 88 members of the "brotherhood" in the

¹ St. Knight, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-209.

House of Representatives and 32 in the Senate. Apart from that, 15 governors and 6 vice governors were Masons.

The ferment in the movement shows first and foremost that many "brothers" have long been unhappy about being kept in the dark as regards the ultimate goals of Freemasonry, while humanity is being pushed ever closer to the brink of the nuclear abyss.

The doctrine of "unlimited intervention" has now been written into the neoglobalist plans of the US and Washington-led transnational power centers. They keep hatching especially dangerous and sinister conspiracies against the independence of the peoples and international peace.

"A coincidence, fate, divine providence,..." Gonzalez-Mata wrote in his book. "Can such factors really explain the course of international affairs? Is it possible that coups d'etat, blood-thirsty dictatorships, wars and acts of aggression were spontaneous and not interconnected?

"We have over the decades been led to believe that this is precisely so. More than one generation lived with this deception because knowledge of the real situation was unavailable. But isn't it time today, in the age of the mass media in which distances have for all practical purposes disappeared, to learn about relationships between individual phenomena?"²

We have tried in this book to identify some of those relationships and connections. Just a small part of them are known to us, of course, but even they are food for thought in our dramatic times.

Masonry and financial capital... Masonry and the war machine... Masonry and profit... When you lay bare such links, you always expose yourself to the risk that your opponents will charge you with simplification.

But what will the reader say when he hears that the "basic law" of the Masons' central project is "merely the law of profit," and also the establishment of a world "economic" government?

Who has said so? A Marxist? An anti-Masonic scribbler? Far from it: those words came from Licio Gelli's friend and supporter and a member of the P-2 lodge, writer Pier Carpi. The writer said nothing that would be his own but merely put

² L. Gonzalez-Mata, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

down what his patron, Gelli, had brought from the United States and preached and tried to translate into practice in Italy. Let us have a closer look at the ideas summed up by Carpi in a book published in Bologna in 1982 to exonerate Gelli from the accusation that he had in some ways betrayed the world outlook and code of Freemasonry.

These are the basics of the nature and program of Masonry and they are given here accurately and in context, just as they were presented by the official P-2 writer.

"The course of Masonic communities in different countries, including Italy, is determined to a very large extent by the United States, where Masonry is especially powerful...

"The US actions are directed at defending NATO and isolating the USSR and other countries of real communism. The positions of the transnationals, most of whose leaders are Masons, are fundamental to this orientation...

"The Masons have drafted under Anglo-American influence a plan for the future restructuring of the world. Its criteria are far less utopian than one might think. It envisages the abolition of national borders while the ethnic and religious differences and traditions of various nations will be retained.

"The fundamental law of this 'utopia' is merely the law of profit and the establishment of a world 'economic government'." By the same logic, the transnational monopolies have set out to subordinate the socialist economies.

"Masonry in capitalist countries encourages the tendency in which private property will be the lawful social instrument. It should be made to work first and foremost by putting commerce and industry under the control of special narrow corporations which will epitomize economic and therefore, directly or indirectly, political power...

"It is in this direction that the Trilateral Commission, considered an emanation of US Masonry, is working. Under Carter it supported the policy of detente in order to contaminate communism ideologically. Some other members of that organization argued that detente benefited the Soviet Union alone, which made a course toward an arms buildup preferable to it. That argument prevailed when US President Ronald Reagan had taken office."³

³ Pier Carpi, *op. cit.*, pp. 133-135.

That is the language in which Masons speak. What we have here is the evolution of Masonic doctrines from the slogan of "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity" to the outright apology of profit and worldwide monopoly diktat, the apology of a policy that does not rule out nuclear war.

That is how the views of those who are hiding behind
the walls of the Masonic "temple"
have changed.

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Lolly Zamoisky

Behind the Façade of the Masonic Temple

Masonry and financial capital... Masonry and the war machine... Masonry and profit... When you lay bare such links, you always expose yourself to the risk that your opponents will charge you with simplification.

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Pier Capri explains that the point concerns placing society under the control of particular corporations which identify themselves with economic power. At the same time, directly or indirectly, they are also identified with political power.

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